

2008-Eckhart Tolle Oprah A New Earth Audiobook Podcast Chapter07

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 1:10:57)

CHAPTER VII Finding who you truly are. Nossi seauton. Know thyself.

These words were inscribed above the entrance to the temple of Apollo at Delphi, site of the sacred oracle. In ancient Greece, people would visit the oracle hoping to find out what destiny had in store for them, or what course of action to take in a particular situation. It is likely that most visitors read those words as they entered the building without realizing that they pointed to a deeper truth than anything the oracle could possibly tell them.

They may not have realized either that, no matter how great a revelation or how accurate the information they received, it would ultimately prove to be of no avail, would not save them from further unhappiness and self-created suffering, if they failed to find the truth that is concealed in that induction. Know thyself. What those words imply is this.

Before you ask any other question, first ask the most fundamental question of your life. Who am I? Unconscious people, and many remain unconscious, trapped in their egos throughout their lives, will quickly tell you who they are, their name, their occupation, their personal history, the shape or state of their body, and whatever else they identify with.

Others may appear to be more evolved because they think of themselves as an immortal soul or divine spirit. But do they really know themselves, or have they just added some spiritual-sounding concepts to the content of their mind? Knowing yourself goes far deeper than the adoption of a set of ideas or beliefs.

Spiritual ideas and beliefs may at best be helpful pointers, but in themselves they rarely have the power to dislodge the more firmly established core concepts of who you think you are, which are part of the conditioning of the human mind. Knowing yourself deeply has nothing to do with whatever ideas are floating around in your mind. Knowing yourself is to be rooted in being, instead of lost in your mind, who you think you are.

Your sense of who you are determines what you perceive as your needs and what matters to you in life. And whatever matters to you will have the power to upset and disturb you. You can use this as a criterion to find out how deeply you know yourself.

What matters to you is not necessarily what you say or believe, but what your actions and reactions reveal as important and serious to you. So you may want to ask yourself the question, What are the things that upset and disturb me? If small things have the

power to disturb you, then who you think you are is exactly that, small.

That will be your unconscious belief. What are the small things? Ultimately, all things are small things, because all things are transient.

You might say, I know I'm an immortal spirit, or I'm tired of this mad world, and peace is all I want. Until the phone rings. Bad news.

The stock market has collapsed. The deal may fall through. The car has been stolen.

Your mother-in-law has arrived. The trip is cancelled. The contract has been broken.

Your partner has left you. They demand more money. They say it's your fault.

Suddenly, there's a surge of anger, of anxiety. A harshness comes into your voice. I can't take any more of this.

You accuse and blame, attack, defend, or justify yourself, and it's all happening on autopilot. Something is obviously much more important to you now than the inner peace that a moment ago you said was all you wanted. And you're not an immortal spirit anymore, either.

The deal, the money, the contract, the loss or threat of loss are more important. To whom? To the immortal spirit that you said you are?

No, to me. The small me that seeks security or fulfillment in things that are transient and gets anxious or angry because it fails to find it. Well, at least now you know who you really think you are.

If peace is really what you want, then you will choose peace. If peace mattered to you more than anything else, and if you truly knew yourself to be spirit rather than a little me, you would remain nonreactive and absolutely alert when confronted with challenging people or situations. You would immediately accept the situation and thus become one with it rather than separate yourself from it.

Then, out of your alertness, would come a response. Who you are, consciousness, not who you think you are, a small me, would be responding. It would be powerful and effective and would make no person or situation into an enemy.

Sure that you cannot fool yourself for long about who you really think you are by showing you what truly matters to you. How you react to people and situations, especially when challenges arise, is the best indicator of how deeply you know yourself. The more limited, the more narrowly egoic the view of yourself, the more you will see, focus on, and react to the egoic limitations, the unconsciousness in others.

Their faults, or what you perceive as their faults, become to you their identity. This

means you will see only the ego in them and thus strengthen the ego in yourself. Instead of looking through the ego in others, you are looking at the ego.

Who is looking at the ego? The ego in you. Very unconscious people experience their own ego through its reflection in others.

When you realize that what you react to in others is also in you, and sometimes only in you, you begin to become aware of your own ego. At that stage, you may also realize that you were doing to others what you thought others were doing to you. You cease seeing yourself as a victim.

You are not the ego, so when you become aware of the ego in you, it does not mean you know who you are. It means you know who you are not. But it is through knowing who you are not that the greatest obstacle to truly knowing yourself is removed.

Nobody can tell you who you are. It would just be another concept, so it would not change you. Who you are requires no belief.

In fact, every belief is an obstacle. It does not even require your realization, since you already are who you are. But without realization, who you are does not shine forth into this world.

It remains in the unmanifested, which is, of course, your true home. You are then like an apparently poor person who does not know he has a bank account with 100 million dollars in it, and so his wealth remains an unexpressed potential. Abundance Who you think you are is also intimately connected with how you see yourself treated by others.

Many people complain that others do not treat them well enough. I don't get any respect, attention, recognition, acknowledgement, they say. I am being taken for granted.

When people are kind, they suspect hidden motives. Others want to manipulate me, take advantage of me. Nobody loves me.

Who they think they are is this. I am a needy little me whose needs are not being met. This basic misperception of who they are creates a dysfunction in all their relationships.

They believe they have nothing to give, and that the world or other people are withholding from them what they need. Their entire reality is based on an illusory sense of who they are. It sabotages situations, amass all relationships.

If the thought of lack, whether it be money, recognition or love, has become part of who you think you are, you will always experience lack. Rather than acknowledge the good that is already in your life, all you see is lack. Acknowledging the good that is already in your life is the foundation for all abundance.

The fact is, whatever you think the world is withholding from you, you are withholding from the world. You are withholding it because deep down you think you are small and that you have nothing to give. Try this for a couple of weeks and see how it changes your reality.

Whatever you think people are withholding from you, praise, appreciation, assistance, loving care and so on, give it to them. You don't have it? Just act as if you had it and it will come.

Then, soon after you start giving, you will start receiving. You cannot receive what you don't give. Outflow determines inflow.

Whatever you think the world is withholding from you, you already have. But unless you allow it to flow out, you won't even know that you have it. This includes abundance.

The law that outflow determines inflow is expressed by Jesus in this powerful image. Give and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap.

The source of all abundance is not outside you. It is part of who you are. However, start by acknowledging and recognizing abundance without.

See the fullness of life all around you, the warmth of the sun on your skin, the display of magnificent flowers outside a florist's shop, biting into a succulent fruit, or getting soaked in an abundance of water falling from the sky. The fullness of life is there at every step. The acknowledgment of that abundance that is all around you awakens the dormant abundance within.

Then let it flow out. When you smile at a stranger, there's already a minute outflow of energy. You become a giver.

Ask yourself often, What can I give here? How can I be of service to this person, this situation? Nothing to feel abundant.

Although if you feel abundant consistently, things will almost certainly come to you. Abundance comes only to those who already have it. It sounds almost unfair, but of course it isn't.

It is a universal law. Both abundance and scarcity are inner states that manifest as your reality. Jesus puts it like this, For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

Knowing yourself and knowing about yourself. You may not want to know yourself because you're afraid of what you may find out. Many people have a secret fear that they are bad.

But nothing you can find out about yourself is you. Nothing you can know about you is you. While some people do not want to know who they are because of fear, others have an insatiable curiosity about themselves and want to find out more and more.

You may be so fascinated with yourself that you spend years in psychoanalysis, delve into every aspect of your childhood, uncover secret fears and desires, and find layers upon layers of complexity in the makeup of your personality and character. After ten years, the therapist may get tired of you and your story and tell you that your analysis is now complete. Perhaps he sends you away with a 5,000-page dossier.

This is all about you. This is who you are. As you carry the heavy file home, the initial satisfaction of at last knowing yourself gives way quickly to a feeling of incompleteness and a lurking suspicion that there must be more to who you are than this.

And indeed, there is more. Not perhaps in quantitative terms of more facts, but in the qualitative dimension of depth. There is nothing wrong with psychoanalysis or finding out about your past as long as you don't confuse knowing about yourself with knowing yourself.

The 5,000-page dossier is about yourself, the content of your mind which is conditioned by the past. Whatever you learn through psychoanalysis or self-observation is about you. It is not you.

It is content, not essence. Going beyond ego is stepping out of content. Knowing yourself is being yourself.

And being yourself is ceasing to identify with content. Most people define themselves through the content of their lives. Whatever you perceive, experience, do, think or feel is content.

Content is what absorbs most people's attention entirely. And it is what they identify with. When you think or say, My life, you are not referring to the life that you are, but the life that you have or seem to have.

You are referring to content, your age, health, relationships, finances, work and living situation, as well as your mental-emotional state. The inner and outer circumstances of your life, your past and your future, all belong to the realm of content, as do events, that is to say, anything that happens. What is there other than content?

That which enables the content to be. The inner space of consciousness. Chaos and higher order.

When you know yourself only through content, you will also think you know what is good or bad for you. You differentiate between events that are good for me and those that are bad. This is a fragmented perception of the wholeness of life, in which everything is

interconnected, in which every event has its necessary place and function within the totality.

The totality, however, is more than the surface appearance of things, more than the sum total of its parts, more than whatever your life or the world contains. Behind the sometimes seemingly random or even chaotic succession of events in our lives as well as in the world, lies concealed the unfolding of a higher order and purpose. This is beautifully expressed in the Zen saying, The snow falls, each flake in its appropriate place.

We can never understand this higher order through thinking about it, because whatever we think about is content, whereas the higher order emanates from the formless realm of consciousness, from universal intelligence. But we can glimpse it and, more than that, align ourselves with it, which means be conscious participants in the unfolding of that higher purpose. That has not been interfered with by man.

Our thinking mind will see only disorder and chaos all around us. It won't even be able to differentiate between life, good, and death. Bad, anymore, since everywhere new life grows out of rotting and decaying matter.

Only if we are still enough inside, and the noise of thinking subsides, can we become aware that there is a hidden harmony here, a sacredness, a higher order in which everything has its perfect place and could not be other than what it is and the way it is. The mind is more comfortable in a landscaped park because it has been planned through thought. It has not grown organically.

There is an order here that the mind can understand. In the forest, there is an incomprehensible order which to the mind looks like chaos. It is beyond the mental categories of good and bad.

You cannot understand it through thought, but you can sense it when you let go of thought, become still and alert, and don't try to understand or explain. Only then can you be aware of the sacredness of the forest. As soon as you sense that hidden harmony, that sacredness, you realize you are not separate from it.

And when you realize that, you become a conscious participant in it. In this way, nature can help you become realigned with the wholeness of life. Good and Bad At some point in their lives, most people become aware that there is not only birth, growth, success, good health, pleasure and winning, but also loss, failure, sickness, old age, decay, pain and death.

Conventionally, these are labeled good and bad, order and disorder. The meaning of people's lives is usually associated with what they term the good. But the good is continually threatened by collapse, breakdown, disorder, threatened by meaninglessness

and the bad, when explanations fail and life ceases to make sense.

Sooner or later, disorder will erupt into everyone's life, no matter how many insurance policies he or she has. It may come in the form of loss or accident, sickness, disability, old age, death. However, the eruption of disorder into a person's life and the resultant collapse of a mentally defined meaning can become the opening into a higher order.

The wisdom of this world is folly with God, says the Bible. What is the wisdom of this world? The movement of thought and meaning that is defined exclusively by thought.

Thinking isolates a situation or event and calls it good or bad, as if it had a separate existence. Through excessive reliance on thinking, reality becomes fragmented. This fragmentation is an illusion, but it seems very real while you are trapped in it.

And yet the universe is an indivisible whole in which all things are interconnected, in which nothing exists in isolation. The deeper interconnectedness of all things and events implies that the mental labels of good and bad are ultimately illusory. They always imply a limited perspective and so are true only relatively and temporarily.

The story of a wise man who won an expensive car in a lottery. His family and friends were very happy for him and came to celebrate. Isn't it great, they said.

You are so lucky. The man smiled and said, maybe. For a few weeks he enjoyed driving the car.

Then one day a drunken driver crashed into his new car at an intersection and he ended up in hospital with multiple injuries. His family and friends came to see him and said, that was really unfortunate. Again the man smiled and said, maybe.

While he was still in hospital, one night there was a landslide and his house fell into the sea. Again his friends came the next day and said, weren't you lucky to have been here in hospital. Again he said, maybe.

The wise man's maybe signifies a refusal to judge anything that happens. Instead of judging what is, he accepts it and so enters into conscious alignment with the higher order. He knows that often it is impossible for the mind to understand what place or purpose a seemingly random event has in the tapestry of the whole.

But there are no random events, nor are there events or things that exist by and for themselves in isolation. The atoms that make up your body were once forged inside stars and the causes of even the smallest event are virtually infinite and connected with the whole in incomprehensible ways. If you wanted to trace back the cause of any event, you would have to go back all the way to the beginning of creation.

The cosmos is not chaotic. The very word cosmos means order. But this is not an order

the human mind can ever comprehend, although it can sometimes glimpse it, not minding what happens.

J. Krishnamurti, the great Indian philosopher and spiritual teacher, spoke and travelled almost continuously all over the world for more than fifty years, attempting to convey through words, which are content, that which is beyond words, beyond content. At one of his talks in the later part of his life, he surprised his audience by asking, Do you want to know my secret?

Everyone became very alert. Many people in the audience had been coming to listen to him for twenty or thirty years and still failed to grasp the essence of his teaching. Finally, after all these years, the Master would give them the key to understanding.

This is my secret, he said. I don't mind what happens. He did not elaborate, and so I suspect most of his audience were even more perplexed than before.

The implications of this simple statement, however, are profound. When I don't mind what happens, what does that imply? It implies that internally I am in alignment with what happens.

What happens, of course, refers to the suchness of this moment, which always already is as it is. It refers to content, the form that this moment, the only moment there ever is, takes. To be in alignment with what is means to be in a relationship of inner non-resistance with what happens.

It means not to label it mentally as good or bad, but to let it be. Does this mean you can no longer take action to bring about change in your life? On the contrary.

When the basis for your actions is inner alignment with the present moment, your actions become empowered by the intelligence of life itself. The Zen master Hakuin lived in a town in Japan. He was held in high regard and many people came to him for spiritual teaching.

Then it happened that the teenage daughter of his next-door neighbor became pregnant. When being questioned by her angry and scolding parents as to the identity of the father, she finally told them that he was Hakuin, the Zen master. In great anger the parents rushed over to Hakuin and told him with much shouting and accusing that their daughter had confessed that he was the father.

All he replied was, Is that so? News of the scandal spread throughout the town and beyond. The master lost his reputation.

This did not trouble him. Nobody came to see him anymore. He remained unmoved.

When the child was born, the parents brought the baby to Hakuin. You are the father, so

you look after him. The master took loving care of the child.

A year later, the mother remorsefully confessed to her parents that the real father of the child was the young man that worked at the butcher shop. In great distress they went to see Hakuin to apologize and ask for forgiveness. We are really sorry.

We've come to take the baby back. Our daughter confessed that you are not the father. Is that so?

is all he would say as he handed the baby over to them. The master responds to falsehood and truth, bad news and good news in exactly the same way. Is that so?

He allows the form of the moment, good or bad, to be as it is and so does not become a participant in human drama. To him, there's only this moment and this moment is as it is. Events are not personalized.

He is nobody's victim. He is so completely at one with what happens that what happens has no power over him anymore. Only if you resist what happens are you at the mercy of what happens and the world will determine your happiness and unhappiness.

The baby is looked after with loving care. Bad turns into good through the power of non-resistance. Always responding to what the present moment requires, he lets go of the baby when it is time to do so.

Imagine briefly how the ego would have reacted during the various stages of the unfolding of these events. The ego and the present moment. The most important, the primordial relationship in your life is your relationship with the now or rather with whatever form the now takes, that is to say, what is or what happens.

If your relationship with the now is dysfunctional, that dysfunction will be reflected in every relationship and every situation you encounter. The ego could be defined simply in this way, a dysfunctional relationship with the present moment. It is at this moment that you can decide what kind of relationship you want to have with the present moment.

Once you have reached a certain level of consciousness, and if you are reading this you almost certainly have, you are able to decide what kind of relationship you want to have with the present moment. Do I want the present moment to be my friend or my enemy? The present moment is inseparable from life, so you are really deciding what kind of a relationship you want to have with life.

Once you have decided you want the present moment to be your friend, it is up to you to make the first move, become friendly towards it, welcome it no matter in what disguise it comes, and soon you will see the results. Life becomes friendly towards you, people become helpful, circumstances cooperative. One decision changes your entire reality.

But that one decision you have to make again and again and again until it becomes natural to live in such a way. The decision to make the present moment into your friend is the end of the ego. The ego can never be in alignment with the present moment, which is to say aligned with life, since its very nature compels it to ignore, resist or devalue the now.

Time is what the ego lives on. The stronger the ego, the more time takes over your life. Almost every thought you think is then concerned with past or future, and your sense of self depends on the past for your identity and on the future for its fulfillment.

Fear, anxiety, expectation, regret, guilt, anger, are the dysfunctions of the time-bound state of consciousness, in which the ego will treat the present moment as a means to an end, as an obstacle, or as an enemy. Let us look at them in turn so that when this pattern operates in you, you can recognize it and decide again. To the ego, the present moment is, at best, only useful as a means to an end.

It gets you to some future moment that is considered more important, even though the future never comes except as the present moment, and is therefore never more than a thought in your head. In other words, you are never fully here because you are always busy trying to get elsewhere. When this pattern becomes more pronounced, and this is very common, the present moment is regarded and treated as if it were an obstacle to be overcome.

This is where impatience, frustration, and stress arise, and in our culture it is many people's everyday reality, their normal state. Life, which is now, is seen as a problem, and you come to inhabit a world of problems that all need to be solved before you can be happy, fulfilled, or really start living. Or so you think.

The problem is, for every problem that is solved, another one pops up. As long as the present moment is seen as an obstacle, there can be no end to problems. I'll be whatever you want me to be, says life, or the now.

I'll treat you the way you treat me. If you see me as a problem, I will be a problem to you. If you treat me as an obstacle, I will be an obstacle.

At worst, and this is also very common, the present moment is treated as if it were an enemy. When you hate what you are doing, complain about your surroundings, curse things that are happening or have happened, or when your internal dialogue consists of shoulds and shouldn'ts, of blaming and accusing, then you are arguing with what is, arguing with that which is always already the case. You are making life into an enemy and life says, war is what you want and war is what you get.

External reality, which always reflects back to you your inner state, is then experienced as hostile. A vital question to ask yourself frequently is, what is my relationship with the

present moment? Then become alert to find out the answer.

Am I treating the now as no more than a means to an end? Do I see it as an obstacle? Am I making it into an enemy?

Since the present moment is all you ever have, since life is inseparable from the now, what the question really means is, what is my relationship with life? This question is an excellent way of unmasking the ego in you and bringing you into the state of presence. Although the question doesn't embody the absolute truth, ultimately I and the present moment are one, it is a useful pointer in the right direction.

Ask yourself it often until you don't need it anymore. How do you go beyond a dysfunctional relationship with the present moment? The most important thing is to see it in yourself, in your thoughts and actions.

In the moment of seeing, of noticing that your relationship with the now is dysfunctional, you are present. The seeing is the arising presence. The moment you see the dysfunction, it begins to dissolve.

Some people laugh out loud when they see this. With the seeing comes the power of choice, the choice of saying yes to the now, of making it into your friend. The paradox of time On the surface, the present moment is what happens.

Since what happens changes continuously, it seems that every day of your life consists of thousands of moments in which different things happen. Time is seen as the endless succession of moments, some good, some bad. Yet, if you look more closely, that is to say through your own immediate experience, you find that there are not many moments at all.

You discover that there's only ever this moment. Life is always now. Your entire life unfolds in this constant now.

Even past or future moments only exist when you remember or anticipate them, and you do so by thinking about them in the only moment there is, this one. Why does it appear then as if there were many moments? Because the present moment is confused with what happens, confused with content.

The space of now is confused with what happens in that space. The confusion of the present moment with content gives rise not only to the illusion of time, but also to the illusion of ego. There's a paradox here.

On the one hand, how can we deny the reality of time? You need it to go from here to there, to prepare a meal, build a house, read this book. You need time to grow up, to learn new things.

Whatever you do seems to take time. Everything is subject to it, and eventually, this bloody tyrant time, as Shakespeare calls it, is going to kill you, a river that drags you along with it, or a fire in which everything is consumed. I recently met some old friends, a family I had not seen in a long time, and I was shocked when I saw them.

I almost asked, Are you ill? What happened? Who did this to you?

The mother who walked with a cane seemed to have shrunk in size. Her face shriveled like an old apple. The daughter who had been full of energy, enthusiasm, and the expectations of youth when I last saw her, seemed worn out, tired after bringing up three children.

Then I remembered. Almost thirty years had passed since we last met. Time had done this to them.

And I'm sure they were just as shocked when they saw me. Everything seems to be subject to time, yet it all happens in the now. That is the paradox.

Wherever you look, there's plenty of circumstantial evidence for the reality of time. A rotting apple? Your face in the bathroom mirror compared to your face in a photo taken thirty years ago?

Yet you never find any direct evidence. You never experience time itself. You only ever experience the present moment, or rather what happens in it.

If you go by direct evidence only, then there is no time, and the now is all there ever is. Eliminating time. You cannot make the egoless state into a future goal and then work towards it.

All you get is more dissatisfaction, more inner conflict, because it will always seem that you have not arrived yet, have not attained that state yet. When freedom from ego is your goal for the future, you give yourself more time, and more time means more ego. Look carefully to find out if your spiritual search is a disguised form of ego.

Even trying to get rid of yourself can be a disguised search for more if the getting rid of yourself is made into a future goal. Giving yourself more time is precisely this. Giving yourself more time.

Time, that is to say past and future, is what the false mind-made self, the ego, lives on. And time is in your mind. It isn't something that has an objective existence out there.

It is a mind structure needed for sensory perception, indispensable for practical purposes, but the greatest hindrance to knowing yourself. Time is the horizontal dimension of life, the surface layer of reality. Then there is the vertical dimension of depth, accessible to you only through the portal of the present moment.

So instead of adding time to yourself, remove time. The elimination of time from your consciousness is the elimination of ego. It is the only true spiritual practice.

When we speak of the elimination of time we are of course not referring to clock time, which is the use of time for practical purposes, such as making an appointment or planning a trip. It would be almost impossible to function in this world without clock time. What we are speaking of is the elimination of psychological time, which is the egoic mind's endless preoccupation with past and future, and its unwillingness to be one with life by living in alignment with the inevitableness of the present moment.

Whenever a habitual no to life turns into a yes, whenever you allow this moment to be as it is, you dissolve time as well as ego. For the ego to survive it must make time, past and future, more important than the present moment. The ego cannot tolerate becoming friendly with the present moment, except briefly, just after it got what it wanted.

But nothing can satisfy the ego for long. As long as it runs your life, there are two ways of being unhappy. Not getting what you want is one.

Getting what you want is the other. Whatever is or happens is the form that the now takes. As long as you resist it internally, form that is to say the world, is an impenetrable barrier that separates you from who you are beyond form, separates you from the formless one life that you are.

When you bring an inner yes to the form the now takes, that very form becomes a doorway into the formless. The separation between the world and God dissolves. The form that life takes at this moment, when you treat the now as a means, an obstacle or an enemy, you strengthen your own form identity, the ego.

Hence the ego's reactivity. What is reactivity? Becoming addicted to reaction.

The more reactive you are, the more entangled you become with form. The more identified with form, the stronger the ego. Your being then does not shine through form anymore, or only barely.

Through non-resistance to form, that in you which is beyond form emerges as an all-encompassing presence, a silent power far greater than your short-lived form identity, the person. It is more deeply who you are than anything in the world of form, the dreamer and the dream. Non-resistance is the key to the greatest power in the universe.

Through it, consciousness, spirit, is freed from its imprisonment in form. Inner non-resistance to form, whatever is or happens, is a denial of the absolute reality of form. Resistance makes the world and the things of the world appear more real, more solid and more lasting than they are, including your own form identity, the ego.

It endows the world and the ego with a heaviness and an absolute importance that

makes you take yourself and the world very seriously. The play of form is then misperceived as a struggle for survival, and when that is your perception, it becomes your reality. The many things that happen, the many forms that life takes on, are of an ephemeral nature.

They are all fleeting. Things, bodies and egos, events, situations, thoughts, emotions, desires, ambitions, fears, drama, they come, pretend to be all-important, and before you know it they are gone, dissolved into the no-thingness out of which they came. Were they ever real?

Were they ever more than a dream, the dream of form? When we wake up in the morning, the night's dream dissolves, and we say, Oh, it was only a dream. It wasn't real.

But something in the dream must have been real, otherwise it could not be. When death approaches, we may look back on our life and wonder if it was just another dream. Even now, you may look back on last year's vacation or yesterday's drama and see that it is very similar to last night's dream.

There's the dream, and there's the dreamer of the dream. The dream is a short-lived play of forms. It is the world, relatively real, but not absolutely real.

Then there's the dreamer, the absolute reality in which the forms come and go. The dreamer is not the person. The person is part of the dream.

The dreamer is the substratum in which the dream appears, that which makes the dream possible. It is the absolute behind the relative, the timeless behind time, the consciousness in and behind form. The dreamer is consciousness itself, who you are.

To awaken within the dream is our purpose now. When we are awake within the dream, the ego-created earth drama comes to an end, and a more benign and wondrous dream arises. This is the new earth, going beyond limitation.

In each person's life there comes a time when he or she pursues growth and expansion on the level of form. This is when you strive to overcome limitations such as a physical weakness or financial scarcity, when you acquire new skills and knowledge, or through creative action bring something new into this world that is life enhancing for yourself as well as others. This may be a piece of music, or a work of art, a book, a service you provide, a function you perform, a business or organization that you set up or make a vital contribution to.

When you are present, when your attention is fully in the now, that presence will flow into and transform what you do. There will be quality and power in it. You are present when what you are doing is not primarily a means to an end, money, prestige, winning, but fulfilling in itself, when there is joy and aliveness in what you do.

And, of course, you cannot be present unless you become friendly with the present moment. That is the basis for effective action, uncontaminated by negativity. Limitation We are here not only to experience limitation, but also to grow in consciousness by going beyond limitation.

Some limitations can be overcome on an external level. There may be other limitations in your life that you have to learn to live with. They can only be overcome internally.

Everyone will encounter them sooner or later. Those limitations either keep you trapped in egoic reaction, which means intense unhappiness, or you rise above them internally by uncompromising surrender to what is. That is what they are here to teach.

The surrendered state of consciousness opens up the vertical dimension in your life, the dimension of depth. Something will then come forth from that dimension into this world, something of infinite value that otherwise would have remained unmanifested. Some people who surrendered to severe limitation become healers or spiritual teachers.

Others work selflessly to lessen human suffering or bring some creative gift into this world. In the late seventies, I would have lunch every day with one or two friends in the cafeteria of the graduate center at Cambridge University where I was studying. A man in a wheelchair would sometimes sit at a nearby table, usually accompanied by three or four people.

One day, when he was sitting at a table directly opposite me, I could not help but look at him more closely, and I was shocked by what I saw. He seemed almost totally paralyzed. His body was emaciated.

His head permanently slumped forward. One of the people accompanying him was carefully putting food in his mouth, a great deal of which would fall out again and be caught on a small plate another man was holding under his chin. Occasionally, the wheelchair-bound man would produce unintelligible croaking sounds, and someone would hold an ear close to his mouth and then, amazingly, would interpret what he was trying to say.

Later, I asked my friend whether he knew who he was. Of course, he said he is a professor of mathematics and the people with him are his graduate students. He has motor neuron disease, which progressively paralyzes every part of the body.

He has been given five years at the most. It must be the most dreadful fate that can befall a human being. A few weeks later, as I was leaving the building, he was coming in, and when I held the door open for his electric wheelchair to come through, our eyes met.

With surprise, I saw that his eyes were clear. There was no trace in them of unhappiness. I knew immediately he had relinquished resistance.

He was living in surrender. A number of years later, when buying a newspaper at a kiosk, I was amazed to see him on the front page of a popular international news magazine. Not only was he still alive, but he had by then become the world's most famous theoretical physicist, Stephen Hawking.

There was a beautiful line in the article that confirmed what I had sensed when I had looked into his eyes many years earlier. Commenting upon his life, he said, now with the help of a voice synthesizer, Who could have wished for more? The joy of being.

Unhappiness or negativity is a disease on our planet. What pollution is on the outer level is negativity on the inner. It is everywhere, not just in places where people don't have enough, but even more so where they have more than enough.

Is that surprising? No. The affluent world is even more deeply identified with form, more lost in content, more trapped in ego.

People believe themselves to be dependent on what happens for their happiness, that is to say, dependent on form. They don't realize that what happens is the most unstable thing in the universe. It changes constantly.

They look upon the present moment as either marred by something that has happened and shouldn't have, or as deficient because of something that has not happened but should have. And so they miss the deeper perfection that is inherent in life itself, a perfection that is always already here, that lies beyond what is happening or not happening, beyond form. Accept the present moment and find the perfection that is deeper than any form and untouched by time.

The joy of being, which is the only true happiness, cannot come to you through any form, possession, achievement, person or event, through anything that happens. That joy cannot come to you ever. It emanates from the formless dimension within you, from consciousness itself, and thus is one with who you are, the ego.

The ego is always on guard against any kind of perceived diminishment. Automatic ego-repair mechanisms come into effect to restore the mental form of me. When someone blames or criticizes me, that to the ego is a diminishment of self, and it will immediately attempt to repair its diminished sense of self through self-justification, defense, or blaming.

Whether the other person is right or wrong is irrelevant to the ego. It is much more interested in self-preservation than in the truth. This is the preservation of the psychological form of me.

Even such a normal thing as shouting something back when another driver calls you idiot is an automatic and unconscious ego-repair mechanism. One of the most common ego-repair mechanisms is anger, which causes a temporary but huge ego inflation. All repair

mechanisms make perfect sense to the ego, but are actually dysfunctional.

Those that are most extreme in their dysfunction are physical violence and self-delusion in the form of grandiose fantasies. A powerful spiritual practice is consciously to allow the diminishment of ego when it happens without attempting to restore it. I recommend that you experiment with this from time to time.

For example, when someone criticizes you, blames you, or calls you names, instead of immediately retaliating or defending yourself, do nothing. Allow the self-image to remain diminished and become alert to what that feels like deep inside you. For a few seconds it may feel uncomfortable, as if you had shrunk in size.

Then you may sense an inner spaciousness that feels intensely alive. You haven't been diminished at all. In fact, you have expanded.

You may then come to an amazing realization. When you are seemingly diminished in some way and remain in absolute non-reaction, not just externally but also internally, you realize that nothing real has been diminished, that through becoming less you become more. When you no longer defend or attempt to strengthen the form of yourself, you step out of identification with form, with mental self-image.

Through becoming less in the ego's perception, you in fact undergo an expansion and make room for being to come forward. True power, who you are beyond form, can then shine through the apparently weakened form. This is what Jesus means when he says, deny yourself, or turn the other cheek.

This does not mean, of course, that you invite abuse or turn yourself into a victim of unconscious people. Sometimes a situation may demand that you tell someone to back off in no uncertain terms. Without egoic defensiveness, there will be power behind your words, yet no reactive force.

If necessary, you can also say no to someone firmly and clearly, and it will be what I call a high quality no, that is free of all negativity. If you are content with being nobody in particular, content not to stand out, you align yourself with the power of the universe. What looks like weakness to the ego is in fact the only true strength.

This spiritual truth is diametrically opposed to the values of our contemporary culture and the way it conditions people to behave. Instead of trying to be a mountain, teaches the ancient Tao Te Ching, be the valley of the universe. In this way, you are restored to wholeness, and so all things will come to you.

Parables teaches that when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, friend, move up higher. Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Another aspect of this practice is to refrain from attempting to strengthen the self by showing off, wanting to stand out, be special, make an impression or demand attention. It may include occasionally refraining from expressing your opinion when everybody is expressing his or hers, and seeing what that feels like. As without, so within.

When you look up at the clear sky at night, you may easily realize a truth at once utterly simple and extraordinarily profound. What is it that you see? The moon, planets, stars, the luminous band of the Milky Way, perhaps a comet, or even the neighboring Andromeda galaxy two million light years away.

Yes, but if you simplify even more, what do you see? Objects floating in space. So what does the universe consist of?

Objects and space. If you don't become speechless when looking out into space on a clear night, you are not really looking, not aware of the totality of what is there. You are probably only looking at the objects and perhaps seeking to name them.

If you have ever experienced a sense of awe when looking into space, perhaps even felt a deep reverence in the face of this incomprehensible mystery, it means you must have relinquished for a moment your desire to explain and label and have become aware not only of the objects in space, but of the infinite depth of space itself. You must have become still enough inside to notice the vastness in which these countless worlds exist. The feeling of awe is not derived from the fact that there are billions of worlds out there, but the depth that contains them all.

You cannot see space, of course, nor can you hear, touch, taste, or smell it. So how do you even know it exists? This logical-sounding question already contains a fundamental error.

The essence of space is no-thingness, so it doesn't exist in the normal sense of the word. Only things, forms, exist. Even calling it space can be misleading, because by naming it, you make it into an object.

Let us put it like this. There is something within you that has an affinity with space. That is why you can be aware of it.

Aware of it? That's not totally true either, because how can you be aware of space if there is nothing there to be aware of? The answer is both simple and profound.

When you are aware of space, you are not really aware of anything, except awareness itself, the inner space of consciousness. Through you, the universe is becoming aware of itself. When the eye finds nothing to see, that no-thingness is perceived as space.

When the ear finds nothing to hear, that no-thingness is perceived as stillness. When the senses, which are designed to perceive form, meet an absence of form, the formless

consciousness that lies behind perception and makes all perception, all experience possible, is no longer obscured by form. When you contemplate the unfathomable depths of space, or listen to the silence in the early hours just before sunrise, something within you resonates with it as if in recognition.

You then sense the vast depths of space as your own depths, and you know that precious stillness that has no form to be more deeply who you are than any of the things that make up the content of your life. The ancient scriptures of India point to the same truth with these words, What cannot be seen with the eye, but that whereby the eye can see. Know that alone to be Brahman the Spirit, and not what people here adore.

What cannot be heard with the ear, but that whereby the ear can hear. Know that alone to be Brahman the Spirit, and not what people here adore. What cannot be thought with the mind, but that whereby the mind can think.

Know that alone to be Brahman the Spirit, and not what people here adore. God, the scripture is saying, is formless consciousness and the essence of who you are. Everything else is form, is what people here adore.

The two-fold reality of the universe, which consists of things and space, thingness and no thingness, is also your own. A sane, balanced and fruitful human life is a dance between the two dimensions that make up reality, form and space. Most people are so identified with the dimension of form, with sense perceptions, thoughts and emotion, that the vital hidden half is missing from their lives.

Their identification with form keeps them trapped in ego. What you see, hear, feel, touch or think about is only one half of reality, so to speak. It is form.

In the teaching of Jesus, it is simply called the world. And the other dimension is the kingdom of heaven or eternal life. Just as space enables all things to exist, and just as without silence there could be no sound, you would not exist without the vital formless dimension that is the essence of who you are.

We could say God if the word had not been so misused. I prefer to call it being. Being is prior to existence.

Existence is form, content, what happens. Existence is the foreground of life. Being is the background, as it were.

The collective disease of humanity is that people are so engrossed in what happens, so hypnotized by the world of fluctuating forms, so absorbed in the content of their lives, they have forgotten the essence, that which is beyond content, beyond form, beyond thought. They are so consumed by time that they have forgotten eternity, which is their origin, their home, their destiny. Eternity is the living reality of who you are.

Some years ago, when visiting China, I came upon a stupa on a mountaintop near Guilin. It had writing embossed in gold on it, and I asked my Chinese host what it meant. It means Buddha, he said.

Why are there two characters rather than one, I asked. One, he explained, means man, the other means no, and the two together means Buddha. I stood there in awe.

The character for Buddha already contained the whole teaching of the Buddha, and for those who have eyes to see, the secret of life. Here are the two dimensions that make up reality, thingness and no-thingness, form and the denial of form, which is the recognition that form is not who you are.

[Speaker 2] (1:11:00 - 1:11:43)

Well, hi. Welcome, everybody. Welcome to Class 7 of our New Earth Web Series with author Eckhart Tolle.

I want to thank our students from every corner of the world who are joining us live on this journey of discovery. I truly believe that as each one of us becomes more awake and aware in our own lives, so will our families and everyone we encounter, our communities and our countries and eventually our world. And so Eckhart Tolle and I welcome you once again to yet another lesson, Chapter 7, my favorite chapter thus far.

Before we get started, we're going to have a moment of silence, and you're going to lead us into that moment of silence. Yes?

[Speaker 1] (1:11:43 - 1:13:34)

Yes. We're already getting used to having moments of silence to start with, and I'll introduce the moment of silence today with a short meditation passage taken from The Power of Now. And as I read this short passage, our viewers should already be able to become still as they listen.

And after I've read it, we'll be still just for half a minute or so. So here we go. It's all about entering the present moment fully.

And that begins with using your senses fully. Be where you are. Look around.

Just look. Don't interpret. Be aware of the silent presence of each thing.

Be aware of the space that allows everything to be. Listen to the sounds. Don't judge them.

Listen to the silence underneath the sounds. Touch something, anything, and feel and acknowledge its being. Observe the rhythm of your breathing.

Feel the air flowing in and out. Feel the life energy inside your body. Allow everything to be within and without.

Allow the is-ness of all things. Move deeply into the now.

[Speaker 2] (1:14:32 - 1:15:49)

That's great. That's great. All right, everybody.

Tonight, we're discussing Chapter 7, Finding Who You Truly Are, which I know is the reason why so many of you picked up this book in the first place, because when I first announced it, I was reading the subtitle that the book is A New Earth Awakening to Your Life's Purpose, and I'd gone on the message boards and so many people were saying, I hope this book helped me discover my purpose. I hope this book allows me to find who I am. Well, if you're ready, tonight's your night.

Let's start with an overview of what this chapter is really about. You say that it is about, you begin with know thyself. Chapter 7 starts with those two words that you say are inscribed above the entrance of a famous Greek temple.

You say on page 186, what those words imply is this. Before you ask any other questions, first ask the most fundamental question of your life. Who am I?

And then you say on page 189 that you are not the ego, so when you become aware of the ego in you, it doesn't mean you know who you are, it means you know who you are not. But it is through knowing who you are not that the greatest obstacle to truly knowing yourself is removed. So let's start off with these two questions.

Who aren't I?

[Speaker 1] (1:15:50 - 1:17:15)

And who am I? And of course, the best starting point is the first question. Who aren't I?

Because what is left when you realize, and it's usually a process for most people, realizing who you are not, letting go of identification with things and so on, when you realize who you are not, then suddenly who you are becomes revealed to you. And who you are cannot easily be put into words, because if it could, then it could be answered in one simple sentence, and then everybody could repeat that answer and believe that they know who they are. So we start with knowing who you are not, and that begins for people sometimes with loss, where they lose something valuable that they had identified with, or death comes into their lives, some kind of breakdown or disaster happens, sometimes those people suddenly awaken, something has been taken away from them that they had identified with for many years that had become part of their sense of self. And if something very fundamental that has been part of your sense of self is removed,

death, loss, collapse.

[Speaker 2] (1:17:15 - 1:17:18)

Even if it's a person, a human being who you loved.

[Speaker 1] (1:17:18 - 1:18:57)

Yes, it could be somebody close to you who dies. Then, of course, at first it leads to enormous suffering, and you feel as if part of you had died also. And for some people that happens even if they lose possessions, because they were so identified with their possessions that when their possessions are removed, they feel there's nothing left of me.

Another related to possessions is social position. If people fall from some high social position, there's a scandal that happens all the time in the news. Yes.

Not mentioning any names. Yes, don't. You don't have to.

And then these people can be extremely painful if they had become totally identified with either their possessions or their social position, and they're suddenly faced with a kind of huge emptiness in their lives. And then the question arises, I'm nobody anymore. And this is the point, a decisive point is reached there where they can either continue to resist and suffer, resist what has happened internally, complain about it, tell themselves story about it, how it's all collapsed, or they can suddenly come to a point of acceptance of what happened and acceptance of the present moment.

So the thing that was so important in their lives, actually left behind, I sometimes compare to, if you look at a person's life, it's a tapestry. It consists of all kinds of things that one identifies with.

[Speaker 9] (1:18:57 - 1:18:57)

Right.

[Speaker 1] (1:18:57 - 1:20:10)

And when a great loss happens, it's almost as if suddenly there's a huge hole in that tapestry of my life. Correct. And that is painful when you identify with a tapestry, but behind the tapestry there's a light that shines through, because without the light there wouldn't be anything at all.

That's why you can't even see your life. Without the light of consciousness, nothing would be. Behind the tapestry there's a light.

I'm using a kind of analogy. So when you don't resist this hole that has suddenly

appeared in this tapestry of your life, then there's a light that shines through then, and I'm using that as an analogy. There's suddenly a peace that comes when the emptiness that is left behind by the form that has dissolved is not resisted internally.

And then through that empty space there comes what the Bible calls the peace that passes all understanding. Because you can't explain suddenly, and people have reported that this has happened to them, they lost sometimes, in some cases, everything. They suffered at first and then suddenly an inner shift happened.

They accepted.

[Speaker 2] (1:20:10 - 1:20:49)

And this also happens when you are grieving somebody that you loved, isn't it true? Yes. Because when you come to understand fully who you are, it doesn't mean that you will no longer be saddened when you lose loved ones.

But you will also, when you become conscious, you then understand that they have just moved from form to formless and that the formless can have an easier way to come through, come through now, even more strongly than it did in the form if you allow yourself to be with it and to see it and to experience it.

[Speaker 1] (1:20:49 - 1:21:44)

Yes. What you just said, an example, I was talking to a woman who lost her son. He had an illness.

He was about 28, I believe. And she was sitting next to him at his deathbed and the moment he, just a few minutes before he died and just after he died, she could sense an enormous peace descending upon the room and filling the whole room and she could feel that there was a sacred presence in the room in the moment of death. So she had totally surrendered to that and it's very painful.

It's even more painful for a parent to have to witness a child's death than the other way around. That was the most sacred moment in her life and that lasted for about 10 minutes and after 10 minutes her mind came in and suddenly she started crying and protesting.

[Speaker 2] (1:21:45 - 1:22:15)

Because the mind wants the situation to be different. The mind wants you alive again in the physical body. Or the mind wants the thing back that I have lost.

The job, the position, the whatever. I think it's harder though when it comes to loved ones because there is a connection there and there is, you know, nobody knows what happens except maybe you, when we die. And so there's this feeling that, you know, I

have lost someone.

Is that feeling selfishness?

[Speaker 1] (1:22:16 - 1:22:39)

No, it's a normal feeling because there was, even if you truly love somebody, of course what you love in the other person is deeper than the form, the external form of that person. Nevertheless there's always a little bit even in true love, there's always a little bit of attachment to the form also. Because the light comes through the form.

[Speaker 2] (1:22:39 - 1:22:41)

The light comes through the form.

[Speaker 8] (1:22:41 - 1:22:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:22:42 - 1:24:12)

Alright, let's go here to page 186 everybody. This is one of my favorite things. A second, I have a cold so I look like I'm sucking on a cough drop.

Unconscious people and many remain unconscious, trapped in their egos throughout their lives, will quickly tell you who they are. Their name, their occupation, their personal history, the shape or state of their body and whatever they identify with. Others may appear to be more evolved because they think of themselves as an immortal soul or divine spirit.

But do they really know themselves? Or have they just added some spiritual sounding concepts to the content of their mind? Knowing yourself goes far deeper than the adoption of a set of ideas or beliefs.

Spiritual ideas and beliefs may at best be helpful pointers but in themselves they rarely have the power to dislodge the more firmly established core concepts of who you think you are which are part of the conditioning of the human mind. This is my favorite in this chapter. One of my favorites.

I have three stars, then another star when I read it the second time and another star. Knowing yourself deeply has nothing to do with whatever ideas are floating around in your mind. Knowing yourself is to be rooted in being instead of lost in your mind.

That was beautifully written.

[Speaker 1] (1:24:13 - 1:24:34)

Yes. And so the... I mentioned that because some people identified many people identified with external things.

You mentioned I believe a week or two ago somebody mentioned to you that they suddenly realized that they are not their car. They're not their car. That's the beginning, early stage of disidentification but it's good.

[Speaker 2] (1:24:34 - 1:24:38)

But we do think we are and that's why you wrote the whole chapter. We do think we are our roles.

[Speaker 8] (1:24:38 - 1:24:39)

Yes, our roles.

[Speaker 2] (1:24:39 - 1:24:52)

Because a lot of people have important roles. Roles as parents and roles in important positions that affect a lot of people's lives and people think that they are their roles and they identify with their status in the world and what they have achieved.

[Speaker 1] (1:24:52 - 1:25:23)

That's right. And of course it's a question of finding a balance of honoring the role, of honoring the function that you have in this world. So that's fine.

You have to do whatever you're doing. You fulfill your function as mother as father or in some other capacity, some public function, business function whatever it is. So to honor the function without becoming totally identified with the function so that always there's still a human being there not just a function.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:23 - 1:25:45)

So knowing yourself deeply has nothing to do with whatever ideas are floating around in your mind. Meaning knowing yourself deeply has nothing to do with me being on television every day, speaking to people and even maybe doing a good job at it. Actually doing a good job at it.

And all the great jobs that everybody else is doing who's listening. Those are identifications with form.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:45 - 1:26:23)

Yes. And also what you just read is people sometimes have certain ideas in their mind of who they are and they may be spiritual ideas. I'm eternal spirit.

That's of course wonderful and basically it is true but do you truly know that because in order to truly know that you are more you are much deeper than this form goes far beyond holding certain concepts in your mind. Yeah. It goes this kind of knowing is a knowing that it goes beyond conceptual knowing.

[Speaker 2] (1:26:23 - 1:26:29)

Because if you really knew that you would have a certain way of being or living in the world that would manifest that in the world.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:29 - 1:26:42)

Exactly. That would manifest your being in the world. That's right.

And particularly when situations happened your reaction to a situation always tells you where you are at as far as your level of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (1:26:42 - 1:26:51)

That is why a lot of people become annoyed with people who claim to be so spiritual or so religious. Yes. Who are intolerant of other people.

[Speaker 8] (1:26:51 - 1:26:51)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:26:51 - 1:27:40)

Intolerant of other ideas. Self-righteous. Imposing their ideas on other people because if you truly were what you say you are.

Yes. So moving on to who you think you are. This is one of my beautiful statements here.

On page 187 everybody. If small things have the power to disturb you then who you think you are is exactly that small. That will be your unconscious belief.

What are the small things? Ultimately all things are small things because all things are transient. And you say your sense of who you are determines what you perceive as your needs and what matters to you in life and whatever matters to you will have the power to upset and disturb you.

So people all the time say I'm a peaceful person. I'm a loving person. Yes.

I'm a kind person. I'm a generous person. I'm a good person.

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:27:41 - 1:28:46)

And then the slightest thing goes wrong and suddenly something else comes up which is total opposite of the good person. And so this is not the deep knowing of who you are. The deep knowing really is we use the word know here in a somewhat differently from the conventional way of using the word know.

Usually knowing is conceptual knowing. Right. So the analogy one could have which is sometimes given is with honey.

You can examine the chemical makeup of honey. You can examine the molecular structure of honey. I can tell you it's sweet.

You can write a PhD about honey or you can write poems about honey. But if you have never tasted honey, in other words if honey has not merged with you, then you don't really know honey. But the moment you taste honey, then you know honey.

And all the other stuff beforehand, even your PhD about honey if you wrote one is not knowing, not true knowing. It's only conceptual. Okay.

[Speaker 2] (1:28:46 - 1:28:53)

So to be rooted in being instead of lost in your mind. And what does that mean to be rooted in being?

[Speaker 1] (1:28:54 - 1:28:59)

And again we are using words here to describe something that really is beyond words. It's not describable.

[Speaker 9] (1:29:00 - 1:29:00)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:29:00 - 1:30:02)

But just a little hint is we always come back of course here in this teaching to the present moment. Absolutely. So when your attention moves fully into the present moment, at that moment you go deeper into being.

You could say that life has two dimensions. There's the horizontal dimension of life, past, future where everything happens. And most people, their whole existence is on that horizontal surface dimension of life.

And they think that's their life. They think that's all there is. And of course then life is quite a threatening place because All that is transient.

Very transient. And you've never encountered the deeper dimension. This by the way is a few people have interpreted the Christian cross which we mentioned also last time in a

slightly different context.

The Christian cross as being showing the horizontal dimension of life and suddenly it intersects with the vertical dimension. It's also the dimension of the sacred.

[Speaker 9] (1:30:03 - 1:30:03)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:30:03 - 1:30:22)

And so you enter the vertical dimension by becoming present by bringing your attention into the now. Because then past and future disappear from your consciousness. At this moment there's only the now and suddenly a depth opens up within you.

[Speaker 2] (1:30:22 - 1:30:33)

And so what you've been saying throughout this book is that if you are living your life in the horizontal, the past and the future, then you're not really living. You are making enemies of this present moment.

[Speaker 8] (1:30:33 - 1:30:33)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:30:33 - 1:30:34)

And you're not truly living.

[Speaker 8] (1:30:34 - 1:30:35)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:30:35 - 1:31:12)

And that when you say, what I interpret when you say knowing yourself is to be rooted in being instead of lost in your mind is to in every encounter, and I've been doing this more and more, bringing, coming back to your breath Yes. Coming back to the present moment in such a way that you are aware and conscious of everything that's going on around you. And recognizing that you you, you are that awareness.

That's who you are. You are the observer of all these things that are going on in the horizontal plane of your life.

[Speaker 1] (1:31:12 - 1:31:30)

Exactly. So with the vertical comes the witnessing presence. That's right.

And so that's the liberation you, that's, you know, sometimes this word liberation is used in spiritual context That's the liberation from the horizontal dimension which Jesus calls the world. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:31:30 - 1:33:38)

You know, may I just share this? I know we have Debbie from the Netherlands on Skype, but maybe this will help illustrate this for you. A couple of years ago, I wrote this in my magazine for one of the What I Know For Sure's.

I was walking with my friend Bob Green on New Year's Day two years ago on a mountain in Hawaii and it was late evening the sun had set while we were walking and the moon had come up and the clouds had come in and come down to the ground where we were. And all of a sudden we were walking and we were surrounded by the clouds. We were in the clouds on this mountain.

And you could only see a sliver of the moon just a sliver of it. And I think Bob made a comment like it looks like the DreamWorks logo, the moon. It looks like you can go and sit up there with the fishing pole.

And we were walking along and all of a sudden he turned around and he said can you hear that? And I stopped and it was completely utterly still. It was so still it makes me want to weep thinking about it.

It was so still that it felt like all of time and no time it felt like the Earth had stopped. That everything had stopped. So much so that my very breath was so loud I began to hold my breath because my breath was making too much noise in the stillness.

And in that moment I understood what you had written in Stillness Speaks that that is always there. That stillness. There's not a bird or a cricket or a frog or a car horn or anything.

That is always there. And that's also an inner dimension. And that is the same as I.

I am that. I am that stillness. It was a powerful spiritual experience for me.

I've never forgotten. I've got chills now even thinking about it. Wonderful.

Because you recognize that is always there. When all the noise and all the fireworks and all the things that go on on this mountain that is always there.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:38 - 1:33:55)

Yes. Consciousness. We could call it, although labels are always limiting, but we could say that is pure consciousness.

Before consciousness becomes something. Before it's born into a form, it's there in its pristine, formless, timeless state.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:55 - 1:34:02)

And in all things, that's why you were asking us to look around the room, there is the stillness of all things. It's easier to determine in nature though.

[Speaker 1] (1:34:02 - 1:34:02)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:34:02 - 1:34:03)

It's harder with a table.

[Speaker 1] (1:34:04 - 1:34:39)

Yes. It's harder. And even harder with human beings.

Because there is so much mind there. So nature, but even in so-called inanimate objects that you perhaps never even look at, haven't looked at for years they've been around you. Sometimes it's wonderful to pick up an object and just be aware of its silent presence.

No matter what it is. Because whatever it is, ultimately, nothing is inanimate. And physicists would agree, because if you go deep into any so-called inanimate object you realize it's intensely alive.

[Speaker 2] (1:34:40 - 1:34:49)

It's easy to do with trees as I said earlier. And so, the essence is what we're trying to get here is that that is who we are. That stillness.

[Speaker 1] (1:34:49 - 1:34:57)

Yes. That's the essence of our being. That's who we are at the deepest level.

This is the timeless dimension within us.

[Speaker 2] (1:34:57 - 1:35:11)

And when you're saying that even when you pass on, when you transition to another, to the formless, that stillness, that consciousness, that spirit, whatever name you choose to give it, still there.

[Speaker 1] (1:35:11 - 1:35:38)

Yes. That awareness is timeless. It's not subject to birth and death.

As I have said somewhere, the opposite of the opposite of life has no opposite. Usually people think in terms of life and death. But really, death is the opposite of birth.

It's not the opposite of life. Life in its essence has no opposite. It's eternal.

[Speaker 2] (1:35:40 - 1:35:53)

Debbie's from the Netherlands and lives in the city of Harlem. She's Skyping us from her family room there. Einstein, you have a question about a quote on page 187 about small things disturbing you.

I love this quote. Go ahead, Deb.

[Speaker 4] (1:35:54 - 1:36:30)

Hi. Hi, Oprah. Hi, Eckhart.

My question is about high sensitivity. I always considered myself as a sensitive person, and that means I'm easily overwhelmed by day-to-day life things that might be considered small. I've been practicing staying in the moment with challenging moments, but I think I need some more advice.

Is high sensitivity just a narrow egoic state? Do you have some tools that might help me to stop feeling so overwhelmed by all these small things?

[Speaker 2] (1:36:30 - 1:36:32)

It does sound like a label you've given yourself.

[Speaker 4] (1:36:33 - 1:36:33)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:36:34 - 1:36:36)

I'm a highly sensitive individual.

[Speaker 1] (1:36:37 - 1:36:48)

Yes. That is true. That also we need to address.

Can you give perhaps two or three examples of what kind of things you are very sensitive to?

[Speaker 4] (1:36:51 - 1:37:03)

Well, a lot of things, but usually when I go into a shop and there's loud music there, I just want to run away. I have a hard time dealing with noise and chaos.

[Speaker 1] (1:37:05 - 1:37:07)

Yes. Or being in a big city, traffic.

[Speaker 4] (1:37:08 - 1:37:08)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:37:08 - 1:39:45)

Yes. Well, I suggest that you experiment a little bit when these situations arise and you feel the same thing happening again. And if you bring very alert attention to the situation, you realize that really there are three levels to this situation.

Level one is whatever it is that disturbs you, the external noise, the chaos, the traffic, whatever it may be. So there is the thing that disturbs you, level one. Level two, there is your reaction to that thing that disturbs you, which could come as an almost physical reaction, as perhaps a contraction in your body.

It could be also an emotional reaction of frustration, irritation, anger, I assume, something like that. Right? And also, in addition, the reaction could be certain thoughts in your head about the situation that says, I can't stand being here any longer, it's dreadful, dreadful.

Right? This is level two. Now, be aware of that these two are, first of all, separate.

There is the triggering event or situation and then there is your physical, emotional, mental reaction to that. And now, what is level three? That is usually overlooked, but level three is where ultimately freedom lies.

Level three is your awareness of both these levels. You are aware that there is the situation, the event, there is my reaction, physical, emotional, mental, and there is myself being the aware space for those two. And if you can bring your attention more to that deepest level, then you realize changes will happen on the other two levels.

If you recognize yourself not as the reacting entity that happens in you, but that's not who you are, but you recognize yourself as the awareness that is aware of the thing that's happening out there, of the thing that's reacting inside.

[Speaker 2] (1:39:45 - 1:39:53)

Actually, like, Debbie, you're observing your own behavior. You're observing your ego's behavior to it. You're observing your ego's behavior.

[Speaker 1] (1:39:53 - 1:39:57)

With no judgment, just as pure observation, pure awareness.

[Speaker 2] (1:39:58 - 1:40:02)

Like, oh, isn't that interesting? I'm getting so upset over this guy pulling in front of me.

[Speaker 1] (1:40:02 - 1:40:42)

Yes, just being there as the awareness. And that's already the beginning of freedom. And then, increasingly, you realize that you are that.

You are not the entity that is reacting. And then, as Oprah said, you can let go of thinking of yourself, of having this concept of yourself as a highly sensitive person, that perhaps you might, it's not natural, nothing personal in this, you may have become attached to, because you've lived with this concept of who you are for many years. So, that's the, that's where freedom lies.

[Speaker 2] (1:40:43 - 1:41:08)

But, in addition to Debbie's question, let's say, and for her, you know, she labels herself or defines herself as a highly sensitive person, but let's say a person gets upset about someone putting a dent in his or her car, or you spill coffee on your blouse right before an important meeting, or your child gets sick, or you get sick, or are you saying that if we get upset about these things, these kinds of things, that we don't know who we truly are?

[Speaker 1] (1:41:10 - 1:41:24)

If the dimension of presence or awareness is missing, then you are lost in the reaction. You think you are the reaction. Yes, then you become the reaction, and when you become the reaction, you don't know who you are.

It's a misperception of who you are.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:24 - 1:41:38)

You got that, right, Debbie? Yeah, yeah, I got it. I got it, too.

Isn't it good when you get it? I got it, too. I got it, too.

And just detaching yourself, that doesn't change the situation.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:39 - 1:42:22)

It doesn't immediately change the situation, but you do find that as you practice this,

changes suddenly appear. Changes sometimes first appear in the force that is behind your reaction that lessens. You react, still react, but less, not as strongly.

And miraculously, you sometimes even find that if you totally, because really the awareness level is also part of the acceptance, completely accepted at this moment, this is what I feel, and this is what the external situation is. With complete acceptance, even changes often happen miraculously in the external situation.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:22 - 1:42:51)

I think acceptance of the situation which you talk about in Power Now, and also repeatedly in A New Earth, acceptance, non-resistance to the moment is one of the most important things we can learn. And that is whether or not you are facing a crisis, whether you're facing someone, you've lost a loved one, or whether you're in traffic and are a highly sensitive person, accepting what is in that moment is the most important.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:52 - 1:43:21)

And you can practice with little things, because little things happen throughout the day that people feel irritated about, angry about, are protesting against, and so on. Or with little things, you will have many opportunities to practice. So it's a wonderful spiritual practice.

So you use what before you wanted to get rid of, you use it as part of your spiritual practice, and then as a by-product, you also eventually get rid of it.

[Speaker 2] (1:43:22 - 1:43:47)

Thanks, Debbie. Thanks so much. Okay, thank you.

From the Netherlands. Thank you. Everybody says they want peace, inner peace and peace on Earth.

On page 188 you say, if peace is really what you want, then you will choose peace. And if peace mattered to you more than anything else, and if you truly knew yourself to be a spirit, rather than a little me, you would remain non-reactive and absolutely alert when confronted with challenging people or situations.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:48 - 1:44:48)

Yes. So you can either be reactive, act according to the way you've reacted for many years, your past conditioning, or you can become more alert when a challenging situation happens, so that you don't internally separate yourself from the situation. So that when you completely open yourself to the situation, that you bring an alertness to it, an alertness of presence.

So you're facing the situation totally with that state of alert presence. You're not reactive anymore. And if something needs to be said or done in the situation, the words will suddenly come from that level of consciousness, from that alert stillness.

If you need to do something, then the right thing, the right doing will happen. Instinctively, or instinctively is not the right word, intuitively the right thing, you will do the right thing.

[Speaker 2] (1:44:49 - 1:44:52)

Because it will be born out of a sense of presence.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:52 - 1:44:52)

Out of presence.

[Speaker 2] (1:44:53 - 1:44:55)

Or a sense of being, which is another word that we're using.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:55 - 1:44:55)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:44:56 - 1:44:57)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:57 - 1:45:09)

And so whenever you are upset about any situation, there's a line in the Course in Miracles that says, I am never upset for the reason I think.

[Speaker 2] (1:45:09 - 1:45:09)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:10 - 1:45:16)

So because when you're upset, you have lost yourself on the external level, what we call the horizontal.

[Speaker 2] (1:45:16 - 1:45:24)

But aren't there some things worth upsetting you? I mean, there are injustices in the world, and there are horrible things happening all the time in the world that we should be upset about.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:24 - 1:45:35)

I wouldn't say that we should be upset about. It is normal for people to be upset about this, but it is not the most effective way of bringing about change. I got it.

[Speaker 2] (1:45:35 - 1:45:37)

You can be upset all day long and nothing changes.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:37 - 1:45:38)

Nothing happens.

[Speaker 2] (1:45:38 - 1:45:40)

Because people have been upset for years and things don't change.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:41 - 1:45:54)

Yes. People are upset about violence. They're upset about war.

Continuous war between nations and so on. It continues to happen. And you cannot fight against...

[Speaker 2] (1:45:54 - 1:45:59)

Somebody emailed me today. They said they were upset about 13-year-old girls having to marry so-called ministers.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:00 - 1:46:00)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:46:01 - 1:46:03)

Upset about it, but being upset about it changes nothing.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:04 - 1:46:26)

No. So it's more powerful to face a situation and see this is how it is, and then see if action is possible. What is it that can be done?

Got it. And then there's no negativity in the action. But if you are resisting, if you are complaining about the situation already, whatever you do, negativity flows into what you do.

[Speaker 2] (1:46:27 - 1:46:48)

I just got something earlier, and the reason I'm thinking about this is because a friend of

mine had lost his loved one and was saying that he was having such a hard time letting go. And what I just had in this moment, something clicked for me, is that when people do finally are allowed to move on from their grief, it's because they have come to the point of acceptance that their loved one is gone.

[Speaker 8] (1:46:48 - 1:46:48)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:46:48 - 1:47:22)

And what you're saying is, in any situation, whether it's the loss of a loved one or loss of a position or loss of whatever that you're faced with, acceptance of the situation and beginning to deal with what is going on now instead of wondering or worrying about what could have been, should have been, might have been, changes the situation and the way you feel about it. And that your pain and suffering is caused and stress is caused because you refuse to accept the now. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:47:22 - 1:47:23)

You're not one with the now.

[Speaker 2] (1:47:23 - 1:47:34)

Got it. So tonight we are Skyping with a new study group in West Hollywood along with Borders where we've been Skyping in Borders in Chicago. Now we've moved to Hollywood.

[Speaker 1] (1:47:34 - 1:47:39)

Very good. At the famed Bodhi Tree. Oh, I love that bookstore.

I was there some years. I gave a talk there.

[Speaker 2] (1:47:39 - 1:47:40)

Don't you love that bookstore?

[Speaker 1] (1:47:40 - 1:47:40)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:47:40 - 1:48:06)

I do too. The Bodhi Tree is considered by many to have one of the best book selections in Los Angeles for the mind, body and spirit. So, hi everybody at Bodhi.

Hi. God, everybody looks so California-like. We can tell we're not in Chicago.

Everybody's all bundled up. I Skyped Tanisha at the Bodhi Tree earlier today on The Oprah Show and she's back tonight with a question. Hi, Tanisha.

[Speaker 5] (1:48:06 - 1:48:07)

Hi, Oprah. How are you?

[Speaker 2] (1:48:08 - 1:48:09)

Good to see you. And your question?

[Speaker 5] (1:48:10 - 1:48:51)

Yes, my question has to do with reactivity. Page 208 totally says, the more reactive... Okay, what is reactivity?

Becoming addicted to reaction. The more reactive you are, the more entangled you become with form. The more I identify with form, the stronger the ego.

My question has to do with I've always related being reactive to being sensitive. And being sensitive allows me to be very passionate about things, allows me to connect with other people and be emotionally available to my friends and family. So my question is how can I retain sensitivity and be passionate about things and keep that but not allow my ego to get stronger?

[Speaker 2] (1:48:51 - 1:48:52)

Great question, Tanisha.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:52 - 1:51:05)

Thanks. Thank you. Well, reaction may appear to be a sign of sensitivity but actually reaction is not sensitive.

Reaction is a conditioned way of responding to a situation and you're not... All reaction really comes from the past because it's part of the way in which you have been conditioned. And because it comes from the past, it is never totally adequate to the present moment.

So sensitivity is actually lost when you are reactive and true sensitivity comes when you are absolutely present in the situation and see this is how it is and you totally face the situation as it is and with that comes enormous sensitivity and with that comes also intuition. It's only when you internally don't resist a situation then the intuitive faculties arise within you. As long as you internally resist a situation and reactivity is always some form of resistance as long as you internally resist then the intuitive faculties cannot really come in because you are acting out old conditioning.

Intuition comes out of presence, out of the present moment. So bringing presence to a situation then that means you become absolutely sensitive and that's also a deeper aliveness and a deeper power than what looks like power and aliveness when you observe somebody reacting. Sometimes it might look very passionate but really they are acting out their past conditioning.

The ego is acting out. That's not true passion. It's the ego wanting this or that from the situation, wanting to manipulate the situation, wanting to get something out of the situation, whatever, but not being truly present.

So it's only through presence that the true sensitivity is there.

[Speaker 2] (1:51:06 - 1:51:35)

Thank you Tanisha and all you Bodhi people. Thank you so much. The Bodhi tree.

Love that. That's great. Continuing on with who we are because I know so many people have this as a prominent question for themselves.

You say on page 189, nobody can tell you who you are. It would just be another concept. So it would not change you.

Who you are requires no belief. In fact, every belief is an obstacle.

[Speaker 1] (1:51:35 - 1:51:43)

What does that mean? It means who you are has nothing to do with any thought that you might have about yourself.

[Speaker 2] (1:51:43 - 1:52:02)

So does who you are have nothing to do with what you've done? So you spend your life here doing all this work and working, working, working, making money, taking care of your family, doing all the things that people do, and that has nothing to do with you. And then you, at your funeral, they read your, you know, words about you and say, this is who you are.

[Speaker 1] (1:52:03 - 1:52:49)

Well, and then there's the gravestone, and on the gravestone there is the date of birth, and there is a one or two inch dash, and then there's the date of your death, and the dash is really all your ambitions and your fears and your drama and your problems. That's what's left on that level. So I'm not saying not to honor the level of form, because that's what we are talking about.

Whatever you do in this life, this horizontal level, where we do things, where we have our

functions and play roles, you honor that level, but realizing there is something more vital, there is something deeper than just that.

[Speaker 2] (1:52:50 - 1:52:58)

Bridget says, Dear Oprah Eckhart, can you explain the quote on page 192, but nothing you can find out about yourself is you. Nothing you can know about you is you.

[Speaker 1] (1:52:59 - 1:54:15)

Yes. So I'm making a difference here between knowing yourself and knowing about yourself. And I mention as an example if you go to a conventional psychoanalyst, let's say, you will spend some years examining the makeup of your conditioning, of your past, your childhood, and so on.

And you find out more and more about yourself things that perhaps you hadn't seen clearly. About your emotions, about the makeup of your thoughts, and so on. And all that is knowing about.

It's to do with content. The content of my life, and the content of my mind, ultimately. Because my life is, I know it only as the content of my mind.

So that is knowing about yourself. And you can know thousands of facts about yourself and your history and still not know who you are. Because that knowing has nothing to do with conceptual knowing, with bits of information.

It's the deeper knowing. I gave the analogy earlier of the honey. The honey.

You can know about the honey.

[Speaker 9] (1:54:15 - 1:54:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:54:16 - 1:54:39)

Or you can taste the honey because when you taste the honey, the honey becomes you. It merges with you. That's right.

That's right. In that sense, knowing who you are in a non-conceptual way is being fully who you are. It's being in touch with that deeper level of being where that you can only access in the present moment, the vertical dimension.

[Speaker 2] (1:54:39 - 1:54:53)

Can I ask, well, if you are reading this book and suddenly become to understand or not reading this book and understand, as you say, many people say, well, I'm a spiritual

being. You know, I'm on my spiritual path.

[Speaker 8] (1:54:53 - 1:54:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:54:53 - 1:55:15)

As many people have said, you know, as I'm reading all of the message boards, which I love by the way. Keep them coming. They say, I've been on the spiritual path for many years or I'm a spiritual person.

Aren't you just a little step closer thinking you're a spiritual person or is that another form of your ego, saying I'm a spiritual person? Well, you have... Because I've said for years, I recognize I'm spirit.

[Speaker 8] (1:55:15 - 1:55:16)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:55:16 - 1:55:25)

That just... Come from the greater spirit. So, I can use the word, I am consciousness come out of the greater consciousness that I call God.

[Speaker 8] (1:55:25 - 1:55:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:55:25 - 1:55:32)

Or spirit that come out of the greater consciousness spirit that I call God. Yes. So, I recognize that.

I know that intellectually.

[Speaker 1] (1:55:32 - 1:56:22)

Yes. So, in that sense, you can say intellectually that is a true statement. But I also feel it deeply.

The question is whether, and this is I know that you do, but any... The question is whether you truly feel that as a reality and a way of finding out how deeply you truly know this is when how you react to situations in your life and how you react to other people in your life. It's there that you find out whether your belief that you are spirit, whether you truly know that or whether it's no more, as I put it, than an idea floating around in your mind.

Do you know it in the depths of your being? Because then, the way in which you deal with situations and people is very different. Correct.

[Speaker 2] (1:56:23 - 1:56:45)

I've always believed that I really was God's child. That I was, you know, come from, and as I've gotten older and could articulate it better, you know, I use other ways of describing it, but I believe that I came from that which is God. Yes.

And was born of that. And so, therefore, really have no real fears in the world. I've always believed everything would be okay.

[Speaker 1] (1:56:45 - 1:56:45)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:56:46 - 1:56:47)

No matter what, I'm going to be okay.

[Speaker 1] (1:56:47 - 1:56:48)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:56:48 - 1:56:49)

Because of that. And you can...

[Speaker 1] (1:56:49 - 1:57:09)

And that's more than a belief. More than a belief. You can sense that.

Yeah. In some way that it's hard to describe. Right.

But you can sense that, ultimately, there isn't you and God. There is a deep place where you and God merge. There's a oneness with that.

Well, I've just gotten that later in life. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:57:09 - 1:57:16)

I used to think God was out there. Yes. Mm-hmm.

Yes. Eleanor lives in Boston, Massachusetts, and is Skyping us from a friend's house. Hi, Eleanor.

[Speaker 3] (1:57:17 - 1:57:23)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Mr. Tolle. This is such a great experience.

I really thank you so much for it.

[Speaker 2] (1:57:24 - 1:57:25)

Well, thank you. Your question is?

[Speaker 3] (1:57:26 - 1:58:21)

My question is, on page 192, you say, you may not want to know yourself because you are afraid of what you may find out. Mm-hmm. My question is about letting go of your insecurities or what you would call your ego.

For many years now, I've been handling, so to say, an eating disorder. It's pretty much been, it's consumed a great part of my identity. That's how I identify myself.

I feel like that causes a great lacking in me. Mm-hmm. In a way, I do want to let go, but then a great part of me just wants to hold on to this identification of myself.

I guess my question is, what is this next step from awakening to the fact that I should move on and acting upon that?

[Speaker 1] (1:58:22 - 1:58:49)

That's the deriving your sense of who you are from certain thoughts or mental images that you have about yourself. That's a normal identity that people have. They derive their sense of self from certain mental images or thoughts they have about themselves, which they repeat to themselves, which they talk to others about.

[Speaker 2] (1:58:50 - 1:58:55)

Yes. It's what Debbie was saying to us earlier from the Netherlands. I'm a very sensitive person.

[Speaker 1] (1:58:55 - 1:58:55)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:58:55 - 1:58:57)

Therefore, lots of things overwhelm me.

[Speaker 1] (1:58:58 - 1:58:58)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:58:58 - 1:58:58)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:58:58 - 1:59:09)

That's already on one level that is true, but if you become too identified with a label like that, then that becomes a hindrance going beyond it.

[Speaker 9] (1:59:09 - 1:59:10)

Mm-hmm.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:10 - 1:59:14)

That's why you immediately said when she said that, ah, there we have a label.

[Speaker 9] (1:59:15 - 1:59:15)

Mm-hmm.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:15 - 2:00:52)

There's a similar thing perhaps that happens to you. It's really finding within yourself something that is more powerful, more genuine, more truly who you are than any image that you have in your mind. And we have to come back here to really the essence of this teaching, which is present moment.

You have to invite the present moment into your life as frequently as you can. You have to make room for the present moment, because it's only when you make room for the present moment that these images and mental concepts about who you are do not operate. So when you become present, and I've already given hints about how to, little things you can do to become present.

At the beginning of our session today, we had this little meditation where we said be aware of your sense perceptions. Touch things, look at things, listen to things without judging, without labeling. Then the alertness rises.

The key is here, another word for presence is the alertness. And so you become alert also within. You feel the aliveness of your inner body.

Rather than having a mental concept of who you are, you feel the entire energy field, that which animates the physical form, and you are in touch with that.

[Speaker 2] (2:00:52 - 2:01:36)

Yeah, and Eleanor, what I would say, add to that is that you haven't done that enough, because once you start to do that, when you get in touch with the inner body, when you begin to feel the inner space, when you begin to feel the presence and being that is really you, you realize you're bigger than your little self with an eating disorder. When you start, and the reason why you're still attached to this idea of having an eating

disorder because that's as big as you know yourself to be right now. And when you know yourself to be something more, you will choose to be the something more, and not this little me that has an eating disorder.

That's how I see it.

[Speaker 1] (2:01:36 - 2:01:37)

Yes, that's it.

[Speaker 2] (2:01:37 - 2:01:43)

That's how I see it. And that's why you're clinging to it, because you don't know who you are. Because you don't know who you are.

[Speaker 3] (2:01:44 - 2:01:56)

It's very difficult to move beyond that. I mean, I may in my mind understand that intellectually that I'm greater than this issue, but it's hard.

[Speaker 2] (2:01:57 - 2:02:21)

You're not going to help yourself through your mind. That's what Eckhart is saying in this whole book. That real healing, real everything, creativity, real joy, real presence and being comes from that space, the inner space of consciousness or presence and being.

And the reason why you're attached to the idea, because that works for you. That works for you right now.

[Speaker 3] (2:02:21 - 2:02:22)

Very easy.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:22 - 2:02:45)

Yeah, that works for you because you like playing small right now. And so maybe you're not ready. But what he just described for you is exactly...

And it doesn't happen overnight. It doesn't mean that, you know, tomorrow you're going to wake up and not have an issue. It's slowly bringing more and more consciousness into your daily way of being that allows you...

[Speaker 3] (2:02:45 - 2:02:47)

It's a lot of effort, that's for sure.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:48 - 2:02:51)

And I would say this, Eleanor, I would say you're worth it.

[Speaker 3] (2:02:51 - 2:02:54)

Thank you. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:54 - 2:02:55)

I would say you're worth the effort.

[Speaker 3] (2:02:56 - 2:02:57)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:58 - 2:03:54)

I want to move on to abundance. And there was a question I had earlier that you had on here about abundance. I love that question.

But there's a lot in Chapter 7 about abundance and that we are not the little me that we think we are. You say on page 190 whatever you think the world is withholding from you you're withholding from the world and you're withholding it because deep down you think you're small and that you have nothing to give. Try this for a couple of weeks and see how it changes your reality.

Whatever you think people are withholding from you, praise, appreciation, assistance, loving, care, and so on, give it to them. So is abundance... Do you have that question to put back here?

The abundance question that somebody had asked in email? What's so great about this, I think, is that it's something people can do every day right now, is to start to give that which you say you most want.

[Speaker 1] (2:03:55 - 2:05:07)

Yes. And it starts with recognizing external abundance, that if the act of recognition that there's external abundance and what that is, we'll see in a second, is the act of recognition of external abundance already brings out the abundance that is an essential part of your very being. So when you recognize abundance without, and what I'm suggesting there is just to look at you walking past a store where there's a display of fruit, apples, oranges, and you see the abundance and the aliveness that is there.

You acknowledge it there. Abundance doesn't mean that you need to buy many things. You can buy or not buy, but it's to see the abundance of water, rain falling from the sky.

There's an abundance of water. There's an abundance of aliveness. There's an abundance of joy in the dog that's going past you there.

And so to recognize, to see the abundance that surrounds you, even if you're very poor in the eyes of the world, the abundance is always there around you, but you need to recognize it, acknowledge it, and another word for that is gratitude.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:07 - 2:05:11)

I know. I was going to say, that's why I've kept a gratitude journal for years.

[Speaker 1] (2:05:11 - 2:05:11)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:11 - 2:05:24)

If you keep a gratitude journal listing, I do this thing, just the five things in the day that made you most grateful, what you start to notice is, is that there are more things added to your list, and you don't even have time to write them all.

[Speaker 8] (2:05:24 - 2:05:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:25 - 2:05:33)

And when you start to pay attention to the things, okay? And you also say acknowledging the good that is already in your life is the foundation for all abundance.

[Speaker 1] (2:05:33 - 2:06:06)

Yes. And again, many people make that mistake because they believe that there is nothing good in my life. And that's absurd.

It means they are not present. They are trapped in certain stories in their head which tell them continuously that there is nothing good in my life. And if they only opened their eyes and looked around, and if they smelled the air, saw the sunlight, the most abundant thing you can see is the sun.

Well, I think the most abundant thing you can have is your breath. The breath? Come back to your breath.

So you can be with that?

[Speaker 2] (2:06:06 - 2:06:09)

When you can't think of anything to be grateful for, go to your breath.

[Speaker 1] (2:06:09 - 2:06:13)

Breath? Or the aliveness in your hands and in your arms to feel that.

[Speaker 2] (2:06:13 - 2:06:22)

Well, the email question from Rosanita in Georgia was to ask you to please explain what you mean by abundance comes only to those who already have.

[Speaker 1] (2:06:22 - 2:06:58)

Yes. Now, abundance, you need to recognize that as coming from within you. Abundance is not something that external things come to you that make you abundant.

Abundance is the energy that flows out of you, out of the being of who you are, into this world. So the beginning of you initiate this process by recognizing the abundance that's all around you externally. Outflow determines inflow.

And then it suddenly, the recognition already draws it out.

[Speaker 2] (2:06:58 - 2:07:10)

I was going to say, isn't gratitude in itself an energy field that draws more to you? Isn't it its own vibrational frequency that draws more to you?

[Speaker 8] (2:07:10 - 2:07:10)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:07:10 - 2:07:15)

And that's what I interpreted you saying. Is that gratitude is its own energy field?

[Speaker 8] (2:07:15 - 2:07:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:07:15 - 2:07:33)

And that when you acknowledge and are grateful for whatever you have, when you can see and feel the gratitude, experience the gratitude in whatever you have, that changes your vibrational frequency, literally, and allows more to be drawn to you.

[Speaker 1] (2:07:33 - 2:08:23)

Yes. It changes your entire reality. It changes the way in which you experience life.

Yes, it does. It changes your world. And so it's, if that's the only thing people remember, there are many things in this book, but just if they want to change their lives, they're not happy with their lives, bring gratitude into it, which is, of course, connected also to the

present moment, because it's only here in this moment.

What is it in this moment that I can be grateful for? Be grateful for. And then you suddenly see, oh, it's all that.

There's always, it's miraculous if you truly look around and sense and feel. It's miraculous. The entire universe is miraculous.

Yes. And when you are so trapped in your thoughts that you don't see this anymore, then the entire universe becomes dead to you and there's nothing new that ever arises.

[Speaker 2] (2:08:23 - 2:09:13)

You know, I was practicing this this weekend. I was saying to Eckhart before we started that I was under the weather and had an obligation in New Orleans and wasn't able to fulfill that commitment and normally I would have just been beating myself up about it, because I've never had to cancel anything before, but I decided to be with the fact that I was sick and I had one of the happiest days of my life, being sick in bed, because I accepted it and was not fighting the fact that I wasn't well. I thought, I'm going to be with feeling badly and I'm going to appreciate everything about the day. So every cup of tea that Stedman brought me, I was happy and happy that I was, you know, I had clean sheets, I mean, and happy that I could open the curtains and there was sun coming through the window, just and I just had the most happy time being sick in bed.

Yes. Yeah, so that's what you're talking about.

[Speaker 8] (2:09:13 - 2:09:14)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:09:15 - 2:09:16)

Being able to be grateful from where you are.

[Speaker 1] (2:09:17 - 2:09:18)

Yes, very, very powerful.

[Speaker 2] (2:09:18 - 2:09:20)

If I hadn't read this book, I might not have been able to do that.

[Speaker 1] (2:09:21 - 2:09:56)

So it's been very helpful to me. And you say, yeah, go ahead. You can even be grateful for things that on the surface don't look so good.

When you accept what is, you're grateful for whatever situation arises. Let's say, your car breaks down and you have to change the tire in the middle of the night and even there you can say, okay, we come to this later in the book. It begins sometimes, a so-called negative situation begins with not resisting it.

Yes. And so...

[Speaker 2] (2:09:56 - 2:10:04)

Don't you say in the power of now, I just interrupted a thought, but don't you say in the power of now that all stress comes from resisting the present moment?

[Speaker 1] (2:10:04 - 2:10:04)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:10:05 - 2:10:05)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (2:10:05 - 2:10:09)

It doesn't come from the situation, it comes from your thoughts about the situation.

[Speaker 2] (2:10:09 - 2:10:14)

Because the tire needing to be changed by itself could not cause you to be stressed.

[Speaker 1] (2:10:14 - 2:10:23)

No, it just is as it is. It is as it is. And if you can see that, then suddenly you move into that and even there comes gratitude.

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:10:24 - 2:10:27)

So your stress is about wanting the moment to be different than what it is.

[Speaker 1] (2:10:27 - 2:10:27)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:10:27 - 2:10:32)

And that's whether it's a tire, losing your job, losing a loved one.

[Speaker 8] (2:10:32 - 2:10:32)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:10:33 - 2:10:45)

Okay. And you sum this up, this abundance, by using a quote from Jesus saying, Give and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap.

That is the truth, so help me.

[Speaker 1] (2:10:46 - 2:12:05)

That is just the truth. Yes. It's an amazing, amazing statement.

And also, somewhere else, Jesus talks about... You must like Jesus. You talk about him a lot.

Oh, yes. There was a time when I... I was brought up as a Catholic and then I...

for many years I wasn't interested anymore. And then after I went through this inner shift, a couple of years afterwards, I happened to pick up the New Testament and I happened to read the Gospels and I suddenly saw how deep all this is, these statements. Right.

It became more than doctrine. Yes, yes. And so Jesus somewhere else says, I want you to have life in its fullness.

I want you to have the fullness of life. And that's a beautiful statement and people sometimes don't realize what he means by the fullness of life because in our civilization particularly, the fullness of life means having as many things as possible. Yes.

And of course, I'm convinced that Jesus was not talking about shopping malls. No. Because if he was talking about shopping malls, then the kingdom of heaven has already arrived and it's in the shopping malls.

So he was not talking about many, many things. Eckhart made a joke, y'all.

[Speaker 2] (2:12:08 - 2:12:09)

Eckhart made a funny.

[Speaker 1] (2:12:12 - 2:12:23)

He was talking about something that is within you. The fullness of life is a dimension within you and he said, I want you to be in touch with that dimension within you.

[Speaker 2] (2:12:23 - 2:12:29)

And you are absolutely right. If you get nothing else from this book, if you can get that, then your life will change.

[Speaker 8] (2:12:29 - 2:12:29)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:12:30 - 2:12:31)

Your life will change.

[Speaker 8] (2:12:31 - 2:12:31)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:12:31 - 2:12:57)

That abundance comes only to those who already have it, page 192. It sounds almost unfair, but of course it isn't. It's a universal law.

Both abundance and scarcity are interstates and manifest as your reality. Jesus puts it like this, for to the one who has, more will be given and from the one who is not, even what he has will be taken away. And he's not talking about things.

No. He's talking about your interstate of gratitude for what you already have.

[Speaker 8] (2:12:57 - 2:12:57)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:12:58 - 2:13:01)

And your life will change. Laura from Baltimore is on the line and has a question for us. Laura?

[Speaker 6] (2:13:02 - 2:13:04)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (2:13:04 - 2:13:05)

Hi. Hello.

[Speaker 6] (2:13:05 - 2:13:41)

Thank you so much for this opportunity. You've both been great spiritual teachers for me and I'm just so grateful. Thank you.

My question is, before reading this book, I was someone who usually suppressed my

emotions. And on page 208, you talk about bringing an inner yes to whatever form that the now takes. So now, when I have the emotion of sadness arise, I try to apply this principle.

In the past, I would have said no to the emotion and suppressed it. But now I worry that by saying yes to this emotion, it's just the ego tricking me and defeating the pain body. How can I be sure that emoting is not actually strengthening my ego?

[Speaker 1] (2:13:44 - 2:15:06)

Right. Good question. So, when you fully allow an emotion, it implies that you are there as the awareness, the witnessing presence.

Because it's only from that space that you can say that this is what I feel and here it is. It's part of the is-ness of this moment. And if you do that, the emotion cannot rise up into your mind and control your thinking.

In other words, it does not become part of ego. It's only if the emotion rises up into your mind and then your mind starts to think along the lines of that particular emotion and thereby feeding more energy to the very same emotion. That means you are strengthening that emotion and it's becoming part of ego.

But if you can just look at the emotion and allow it to be, then the emotion is not going to feed on your thoughts anymore. And then you will actually find when you allow an emotion to be, it subsides fairly quickly. And it's not part of ego.

This practice is going beyond emotion without repressing them.

[Speaker 2] (2:15:07 - 2:15:08)

You got that, Laura?

[Speaker 6] (2:15:09 - 2:15:10)

Yes, thank you so much.

[Speaker 2] (2:15:10 - 2:16:11)

I love that. Tell us the story of the Zen Master on 199, the one who said, is that so? I mean, I think you have to be a Zen Master, practically, to have that kind of reaction to everything in life.

Because when somebody attacks you, that's a thing I still have to work on. Because I live in a world where people write things that are not true all the time. Somebody's working on a biography of me now, unauthorized.

So I know it's going to be lots of things in there that are not true. And so, I've gotten

better at it. And I know everybody experiences it on one level or another.

For me, it's people saying things about me that are not true. It caused me to show myself as a small person. The little me comes out.

And I'm like, that's not true! And so this Zen Master who's able to say, when he's being accused of, you know, doing something horrible to this girl, is that so? Who can do that?

[Speaker 1] (2:16:11 - 2:17:00)

It's a very extreme form of being one with the present moment. This is a, I believe, should I tell the story? Yes, please do.

So there was a Zen Master. He was highly regarded. And he was a spiritual teacher, had a very good reputation.

And one day, neighbors of his came to him and said, our daughter is pregnant, and you remember, she came to see you about some advice some time ago, and she has now confessed to us that you are the father of this baby that's going to be born out of our 17-year-old daughter. And of course, they didn't tell him this in the way as I'm telling it to you. They were very angry.

[Speaker 2] (2:17:01 - 2:17:02)

Is this a true story?

[Speaker 1] (2:17:03 - 2:18:46)

I believe it is. So there was an enormous anger in this situation, you can imagine. And the Zen Master was listening to them as they were telling them that he had fathered this child.

He was listening in that Zen state of open alert attention, like this. And then when they had finished their story, you are the father of this child, and he said, is that so? Yes, he said.

And then we are going to, when the child is born, you are going to look after the baby, because you are responsible. Is that so? And so when the baby was born, they brought the child over to him and said, now you look after the baby, it's not ours, you are responsible.

And he accepted the baby, and the word got round that he had fathered a child by a 17-year-old girl. He lost his reputation, nobody came to see him anymore. He was totally indifferent to this, because he was only responding to the needs of the present moment, so he started looking after the baby.

And so she spent about a year looking after the baby, and in the meantime the mother of the baby grew up a little bit more, and suddenly she confessed to her parents that the Zen master was not the father, she just didn't want to tell them that it was the boy who works in the butchers who was the father. And of course the parents got extremely upset, and they came running to the Zen master and said, she has just told us that you are not the father. He said, is that so?

Yes, and so we would like our baby back please. And so he handed the baby over. It's the story that...

[Speaker 2] (2:18:46 - 2:18:48)

It must be in the Zendom kingdom or something.

[Speaker 1] (2:18:49 - 2:19:01)

Continuous, it's the story that shows an extreme example of absolute non-resistance, and the good that comes because the baby was being looked after with loving care for a whole year by this Zen master.

[Speaker 2] (2:19:01 - 2:19:11)

But why wouldn't a Zen master, okay, because he's a Zen master. Is that the level that you were saying that we should be striving? Well I know you're not saying we should do anything, we should do whatever we want to do.

[Speaker 1] (2:19:11 - 2:19:15)

It is not necessary, that is only to exemplify...

[Speaker 2] (2:19:15 - 2:19:18)

Because I would be it is not true! It's not true!

[Speaker 1] (2:19:20 - 2:19:47)

Or you can say no, I'm not the father. It's not true, I'm not the father. So you can say it in one way that is very reactive and that would be the normal way, or you can say it in a way that is free of reaction and nevertheless states the truth.

So you're still surrendered inside, you're still accepting that these parents this is where they are at, this is what they believe, and simply you say this is not the case, I'm not the father.

[Speaker 2] (2:19:47 - 2:19:58)

Bottom line is you're saying don't get pulled into the drama. Yes. Don't get pulled into

the drama.

Yes. State your case, state the facts without allowing your ego to be pulled into the drama of it.

[Speaker 8] (2:19:59 - 2:19:59)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:19:59 - 2:20:21)

And then be able to move on. That's right. That's what you're saying.

That's it. Okay, we've got Fatima on the line from Kuwait. Hello, Fatima?

Hello? Hello. Hi Oprah.

Hi. Hi. Nice to see you.

Or hear you. Hi. Can you hear me?

Yes we can. Go ahead with your question.

[Speaker 7] (2:20:21 - 2:20:43)

Okay, great. Since we are used to identifying ourselves with what we have and what we do, I would like to ask you, Oprah and Eckhart, to identify yourself without names or any form of identification so other people can get a better understanding of who they are and what you mentioned on page 186. Okay, Eckhart, go right ahead and do that.

[Speaker 1] (2:20:43 - 2:20:44)

The sound wasn't so good.

[Speaker 2] (2:20:44 - 2:21:07)

She was saying since we're so used, accustomed to identifying ourselves through labels and what we do, she would like for you and I, I would like for you, to identify yourself without using those labels of identification so that everybody listening can get a better idea then of how then do you describe yourself.

[Speaker 1] (2:21:07 - 2:21:38)

Yes, so we're talking about being with another person. When you identify yourself, you identify yourself to another person. Yes.

So there's a situation where you meet somebody, perhaps somebody you don't know yet. Yes. And so you can be there as an ego entity in which case you would immediately

explain your achievements or you would immediately explain your sufferings or your diseases that you identify with or whatever.

[Speaker 2] (2:21:38 - 2:21:43)

Sometimes people do it this way, which annoys me, they'll say, what school did you go to?

[Speaker 1] (2:21:43 - 2:21:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:21:44 - 2:21:47)

That's immediately to say whether or not you're in the category.

[Speaker 1] (2:21:47 - 2:22:13)

That's right. Yes. So people, they want to as the mind, that's what the human mind does, they want to be able to classify you, they want to be able to find out where they can put you in there.

So they're asking questions about that but you don't need to be drawn into that and realize that as you, and this is a very very important thing.

[Speaker 2] (2:22:13 - 2:22:19)

Okay, so let's say we didn't know you and you're at a gathering where people don't know you.

[Speaker 8] (2:22:19 - 2:22:19)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:22:19 - 2:22:22)

And I come up and I introduce myself and I say, hello, I'm Oprah.

[Speaker 8] (2:22:23 - 2:22:23)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:22:23 - 2:22:38)

And I'm here with a convention and I'm, you know, I sold so many pharmaceuticals and I did so this and that, I've got three kids, I live in Oregon, whatever. How would you then describe yourself?

[Speaker 1] (2:22:39 - 2:24:06)

Well, perhaps I would not use that many words but some words might be there. I wouldn't say, I am formless spirit or anything like that. You wouldn't?

No. Hello, I am formless spirit. I once asked somebody, I met somebody at a reunion and they knew that I had already written The Power of Now so I was a spiritual teacher and so I asked, for some reason we had a conversation and I asked how old are you?

And he said, I was never born. He really wanted to teach me a lesson. Oh boy.

So you can be quite normal in your interaction but more important is on a sensing level, you are there as a field of aware presence and in an interaction with another human being, what matters is not so much the words that are being said, there is a deeper level of the awareness that arises, the field, I call it the field of awareness that arises between two human beings. The field of presence that arises when those human beings or even just one of them is not totally identified with their thinking mind and the ego. Then I can be there as a conscious presence.

Right now as I sit here, I can, I'm here as a conscious presence.

[Speaker 2] (2:24:07 - 2:24:12)

So you wouldn't say, I'm Eckhart formless spirit, you would just say, I'm Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (2:24:13 - 2:24:13)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:24:13 - 2:24:16)

And if they say, well hey, what do you do?

[Speaker 1] (2:24:16 - 2:25:01)

Yes, then I give a conventional answer, I'm a writer. And then they ask, what do you write about? And then depending on, I kind of sense where they are at, whether it's a genuine question and they truly want to know or whether it's a question when I come into the States from Canada every week, they ask me, what do you do?

And then I say, I'm a writer. And then they ask, what do you write about? And then I'm not going to give a deep answer because they don't want a deep answer.

They're not really interested. No. So I give conventional answers.

And yet, in every human interaction, even such an interaction as this, when the...

[Speaker 8] (2:25:01 - 2:25:01)

Imaginary.

[Speaker 1] (2:25:02 - 2:25:12)

Always what is, you need to be able to sense that there is a presence underneath whatever you're saying.

[Speaker 2] (2:25:12 - 2:25:12)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (2:25:12 - 2:25:15)

Feel your own presence underneath it.

[Speaker 2] (2:25:15 - 2:25:42)

And that's what we're going to be talking about next week, is to be able to bring, that is our role in this lifetime, is to bring that sense of presence, who you really are, not the small little self that is you know, has eating disorders or shops too much or all the other things that we define in our horizontal lives as ourselves, but to bring that presence into your active life. That's right. That is our goal.

[Speaker 8] (2:25:42 - 2:25:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:25:43 - 2:26:11)

Yes. Alright, let's talk about the joy of being. Unhappiness or negativity is a disease on our planet.

What pollution is on the outer level is negativity. Page 213, everybody. What pollution is on the outer level is negativity on the inner.

It is everywhere. Not in just places where people don't have enough. I love this.

But even more so where they have more than enough. Their fluent world is even more deeply identified with form, more lost in content, more trapped in ego.

[Speaker 1] (2:26:12 - 2:26:12)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:26:12 - 2:26:13)

I thought that was interesting.

[Speaker 1] (2:26:13 - 2:27:20)

Yes. Sometimes you see, you know, when you visit certain places where people have relatively little, often you see more happy faces and radiant faces than in our rich society. So the passage is about negativity and there's an enormous amount of negativity in the collective energy field of our planet, but it is generated by individuals.

So it's everybody's task to be alert so that when negativity arises within them, they recognize it and then ask themselves whether that is what they choose. When you recognize it, you can be there as the presence and you have a choice. Is negativity ever the optimum way of dealing with any situation?

And if you look closely you'll see it never is a good way of dealing with any situation.

[Speaker 2] (2:27:20 - 2:27:54)

Okay, you say on page 214, the joy of being, which is the only true happiness, cannot come to you through any form, possession, achievement, person or event. And that means people who think that I'm with you and I love you and you're going to bring me joy, cannot. Yes.

You either are joy or you're not. Yes. Okay.

Through anything that happens, that joy cannot come to you ever. It emanates from the formless dimension within you, from consciousness itself and thus is one with who you are.

[Speaker 1] (2:27:55 - 2:28:42)

Yes, it comes from within and not from without. People conventionally expect it to come to them from without and then it usually doesn't because you need to discover it in yourself first and this is why when you try to manifest things in your life, which is a fine thing to do, but the vital question is, have you, first of all, already come to that place of fullness and joy within yourself right now? Have you found a right relationship with the present moment?

If you haven't, because that's where it resides. It's only by having a right relationship with the present moment that the joy can arise from within you.

[Speaker 2] (2:28:42 - 2:30:06)

You talk about that on 210 when you say to awaken within the dream is our purpose now. When we are awake within the dream, the ego-created earth drama comes to an end and a more benign and wondrous dream arises, this new earth. Also, let's go to page

215 everybody.

The top of 215 you talk about a powerful spiritual practice is consciously to allow the diminishment of ego because what we've been learning through A New Earth is that most of us have, until reading this book, believe we were our egos. Believe we were, as Eckhart has said earlier in tonight, we believe we were our horizontal life without the vertical. We believe we were our past.

We believe we are what we're going to do and what we have done. And the now was always just a sort of means to an end. So, you say a powerful spiritual practice is consciously to allow the diminishment of ego when it happens without attempting to restore the ego.

I recommend that you experiment with this from time to time. For example, when someone criticizes you blames you or calls you names I gotta tell you, it's hard to say is that so? Instead of immediately retaliating or defending yourself do nothing.

Allow the self-image to remain diminished and become alert to what that feels like deep inside you. So what's that supposed to do for us?

[Speaker 1] (2:30:09 - 2:30:38)

I'm not saying in each case you should do that. Experiment with this from time to time. Particularly when nothing depends on that situation.

So you don't have to explain something so that a situation can be put right or whatever. Somebody just calls you we talked about it the other day. Somebody cuts you off in traffic?

Yes. So that would be a good practice. But it's totally pointless to retaliate.

[Speaker 9] (2:30:38 - 2:30:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:30:38 - 2:31:12)

It makes no sense whatsoever. But the retaliation when somebody calls you names in traffic or whatever. Or does something to upset you.

Yes. Try doing nothing. Yes.

The retaliation is automatic and unconscious because it comes from the ego. Because when somebody calls you stupid for example. Right.

Or somebody calls you idiot it injures the ego. It hurts the ego. And it's the ego that's being injured not you.

Not you. It's nothing because deep down you know that it's not you. It's just the ego image of who I think I am.

[Speaker 2] (2:31:13 - 2:31:19)

Well deep down you know it's not you. But if you are a person who lives unconsciously. If you live out of your ego you think it's you.

[Speaker 1] (2:31:19 - 2:31:30)

Yes. And immediately the ego will go into what I call instant self repair mechanism. And this instant self repair mechanism which is totally unconscious.

[Speaker 2] (2:31:30 - 2:31:32)

Says I am not stupid.

[Speaker 1] (2:31:32 - 2:32:08)

Well it will call the other person something worse than stupid. And by that the ego believes that it has repaired itself and on that level it has. So this person has taken something away from you.

It's the imaginary ego. And then you take something away from that other person. That's how the egos work.

And then of course it's probably not the end because the other person is going to retaliate again. Right. And now you're in it.

The whole madness starts. Now you're in the drama. Yes.

So this is a good example where you can practice being non-reactive so when somebody calls you something remain totally.

[Speaker 2] (2:32:08 - 2:32:29)

And you say when that happens just do it for a few seconds. It may feel uncomfortable as it will. Just to keep your mouth shut.

I've had that this week. Just to keep your mouth shut. It's hard.

It feels like you've shrunk in size momentarily. Then you may sense an inner spaciousness that feels intensely alive. You haven't been diminished at all.

In fact you have expanded. What do you mean by that?

[Speaker 1] (2:32:30 - 2:33:15)

Yes. So somebody you are not what you are not defending is your egoic identity. The image identity.

And that suddenly that has become diminished by somebody calling you stupid for example. This entity has become diminished. You don't resist the diminishment.

So it has become smaller so to speak. And therefore suddenly something that is deeper than that can suddenly come through because the ego has shrunk in size. I got it.

No the ego doesn't like that. That's right. It's a wonderful experiment when you allow the ego to shrink and then suddenly you feel there is a power underneath that that's far greater than the ego.

[Speaker 2] (2:33:15 - 2:33:17)

And it shrinks every time you become aware of it.

[Speaker 8] (2:33:17 - 2:33:18)

Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:33:18 - 2:33:20)

Even when you don't do what you are supposed to do?

[Speaker 8] (2:33:20 - 2:33:21)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:33:21 - 2:33:22)

Okay.

[Speaker 8] (2:33:22 - 2:33:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:33:23 - 2:33:36)

I like this question from Suhad in Clifton, New Jersey. How can we use the high quality no that you talk about on page 216 in our lives? Can you please provide us with some real life examples?

216. High quality no.

[Speaker 1] (2:33:37 - 2:34:47)

What did you mean by high quality no? In some cases sometimes people misunderstand

when I say say yes to the present moment. They believe then whenever somebody asks you something, you have to say yes.

No, when I say yes to the present moment, it's to do with an inner state of consciousness that is open to what is. That does not resist what is. It does not necessarily mean that every time somebody asks you something, you say yes.

So, let's say a person comes to you, you've known him, you've already lent him money five times, he's never returned it. Or two. Two is enough.

And so he says, I need another \$500 now. And then you perhaps this may be a good opportunity and occasion where you can use a high quality no that is not reactive and does not make that person wrong and so he becomes angry or shouts at him. So you are dishonest, you haven't returned my money, and I'm not giving you a penny more.

This is a low quality no. It's a low quality. A high quality no is to say...

[Speaker 2] (2:34:47 - 2:34:55)

Who do you think you are? Stories in order to make wrong. Yes, I've given you money so many times before.

[Speaker 1] (2:34:55 - 2:34:57)

Yes, and then you make yourself into a victim.

[Speaker 2] (2:34:58 - 2:35:02)

Or make yourself into the great person who's been so benevolent.

[Speaker 1] (2:35:02 - 2:35:26)

Yes, whatever the egoic game is. So the high quality no is to simply state, well, I've already given you that money twice and you haven't returned it yet so I won't give you any more. You have to return my money first.

I'm not going to give you... Can you sense that there's no negativity? You simply state clearly, this is what I'm going to do or not do.

I won't give you any more because you haven't returned that.

[Speaker 2] (2:35:26 - 2:36:31)

Yes. That happened to me recently. Somebody was asking me, and I said, no, I won't do that.

And no emotion attached to it at all. Alright, I just want to say here that the... I love this

on 220.

What you see, hear, feel, touch, or think about is only one half of reality, so to speak. It is form. In the teaching of Jesus, it's simply called the world and the other dimension is the kingdom of heaven or eternal life.

Then toward the bottom of the page, second to last paragraph, you say, the collective disease of humanity is that people are so engrossed in what happens, so hypnotized by the world of fluctuating forms, so absorbed in the content of their lives, they have forgotten the essence, that which is beyond content, beyond form, beyond thought. They're so consumed by time that they have forgotten eternity, which is their origin, their home, their destiny. Eternity is the living reality of who you are.

And that's what I felt on that mountain that day.

[Speaker 1] (2:36:31 - 2:37:24)

Yes. Yes. And you can actually sense it, although that's the wonderful thing when you can be surrounded by the stillness.

Yeah. But the amazing thing is you can actually sense that even in the midst of chaos, even in the midst of noise, I have felt also what you describe, I've also very often felt that in nature. But I have also felt that extreme peace in situations where one wouldn't expect it.

I felt it in the middle of London, in busy streets walking around, especially after I went through this shift. Before I went through this shift I was always anxious and fearful and I couldn't stand the traffic and the noise. And suddenly I was able to just walk along Piccadilly Circus and be totally at peace as if I were on a mountaintop inside.

So when you...

[Speaker 2] (2:37:25 - 2:37:26)

Mountaintop inside.

[Speaker 1] (2:37:26 - 2:37:27)

Inside, yeah.

[Speaker 2] (2:37:27 - 2:37:29)

And that's what presence is, is it not?

[Speaker 1] (2:37:29 - 2:37:29)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:37:29 - 2:37:32)

Presence is being on the mountaintop inside.

[Speaker 1] (2:37:32 - 2:37:53)

Yes. That stillness is always there in you as the essence of who you are. And when we call it stillness we are already limited because it's so vast you cannot describe it with one word.

Right. So whatever word you use is already a limitation. But words are limited of course because words refer to tangible things but not to the inner reality.

[Speaker 2] (2:37:54 - 2:38:01)

So before we say goodbye let's sum up what we've covered in this class. Knowing who you really are means knowing.

[Speaker 1] (2:38:02 - 2:39:25)

Yes. Knowing at a level beyond the level of concepts. Knowing yourself ultimately is being yourself fully.

Being in touch with being. The being that you are. To sense the I am that is the essence of your identity when you remove all the identifications that usually you say after you say I am you say what you are.

But if you say I am and add nothing to it that gives a good practice. It can get you in touch with the essence. I am not this.

I am not that. I am. It's a simple meditation.

Repeat the words I am to yourself. It's so powerful. I started to do that.

It is so powerful when you do that. And don't fill in the blank after the words. Very powerful.

Another similar one is Who am I? It's a question but don't look to the mind for an answer. In fact don't look for any answer especially not on the level of mind.

Who am I? And then allow the stillness to be there after the question. Don't look for an answer.

And in not looking for an answer there is the answer but not a mental concept as of sensing. Feeling. I am.

[Speaker 2] (2:39:27 - 2:41:02)

And just be with that. And so for whether it's an addiction or an eating disorder or nothing. You think you have a really wonderful life.

But you are connected to all the things in your life. To the content of your life. Just being able to sit with yourself and to say those words to yourself.

I am. And to recognize them. To know them.

Like honey. To know them. Thank you again.

I want to thank you all for joining us. The 7th class will be available on demand tomorrow. Finding who you truly are for free here at oprah.com.

And if you want to download or watch any of our classes of course you know this by now. You can do that tomorrow at oprah.com and at iTunes. It's free because of the generous support of people like Nature Made Soft Gel Vitamins.

This week update your workbook and get ready for our next class on chapter 8. It's the Discovery of Inner Space. I love this.

It's my next favorite chapter. I think 7, 8, and 9 are really the essence of the book. Inner Space is about allowing the inner space of your life to connect to the outer purpose of your life.

The inner and outer purposes of your life. Right? That's right.

Love it. Again we thank you. This was a long chapter.

Lots to cover. I would say to everybody, I mean I was sick in bed this weekend and read it again for the third time. Every time I read it I go a little deeper and awaken a little more.

So this is one you need to be with for a while.

[Speaker 1] (2:41:02 - 2:41:02)

Definitely.

[Speaker 2] (2:41:02 - 2:41:03)

Over and over.

[Speaker 1] (2:41:03 - 2:41:10)

And after you've read it once you don't need to read long pages. Just read sometimes half a page is enough.

[Speaker 2] (2:41:10 - 2:41:31)

Yes. One page. What I do is I go back and read.

This is what I would do. As you're using your highlighters, just go back and read what you've highlighted and just be with that. Because the things that you highlight are usually things that resonate with you more deeply.

It's a good way of reviewing it. And every time you come back to it, you know, two weeks from now you'll get something that you didn't get the first time.

[Speaker 8] (2:41:31 - 2:41:32)

Oh yes. Oh yes. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:41:32 - 2:41:33)

Thank you.

[Speaker 8] (2:41:33 - 2:41:34)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:41:34 - 2:41:35)

Thank you Eckhart. Thanks everybody.